

THE THREAD OF UNITY
A REPORT ON THE MERGER
OF
CHRIST CHURCH
UNITING DISCIPLES AND PRESBYTERIANS
IN
KAILUA HAWAII

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A B S T R A C T

The cultural and religious heritage of the American Protestant religious movement imparts a certain homogeneity which can contribute to the organic union of the churches where it is given impetus by a spiritual response to the Gospel.

The spiritual base for union is found in the unity of God and Jesus Christ which is a oneness that is both gift and commandment. A gift in the sense that God wills that we be one and a divine imperative to the church to make that oneness visible before the world. (Eph. 6:10)

The possibility among Christians is demonstrated by the dynamics of the merger of two congregations in Kailua, Hawaii: Windward Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Christ Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church, USA.

The process for that merger is reported. It includes the various phases leading to the negotiations for a combined church and the activities that culminated in the unification of the two congregations into Christ Church, Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians in Kailua. The date was February 10, 1974.

In a series of interviews in July 1975, certain conclusions were drawn relative to the influence of the merger on the members of Christ Church and the possible

impact of such unions on the general ecumenical movement.
God's plan for the fulness of time is the unity of all
creation in one fellowship of love.

INTRODUCTION

The thoughts which are presented in the following pages are based on the belief that there are two distinct ethoi at work in the American culture which directly contribute to possible unity in the church. One is a national ethos which gives the citizen of the United States a distinct value system which defines him as American. The second is a religious ethos which grows from his unique cultural heritage. What the American is, then, he is as a result of the reciprocal influences of the state and the church. What the church has become in America is directly related to the national ethos. Conversely, much of the nation's interest in the rights and needs of its citizenry is a result of the influence of the church.

The national ethos gives the American certain definable traits of character which have come to be held as common values---values such as freedom, independence, individuality, voluntarism, achievement, success, progress and patriotism. From his spiritual ethos the American derives the added common values of morality, equality and humanitarianism. More than any other nation in the world, the United States has adopted the traditional role of the church in its care for the poor, the jobless and the hungry. More than in any other nation in the world the growth of

the church has been affected by its national ethos of voluntary membership and localism. It is in this reciprocal influence of principles, one religious and the other political, that the American nation remains most unique. For the ecumenical movement this influence can be most profound, for the American has a tremendous capacity for response to that which he espouses. On the other hand he has a like capacity to oppose that to which he is coerced. In simple terms, the American can and will do anything he wants to do. He cannot be made to do anything!

For this reason, it behooves the ecumenist to be aware of the positive and the negative elements in the personality of the parishioner. The enigma of it all is that he can do two very different things for the very same reason--because he is "turned on" to what it is he is doing.

The report on the merger of the two congregations in Kailua, Hawaii, Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church which follows on these pages will strive to demonstrate this thesis. The resulting union, Christ Church, uniting Disciples and Presbyterians in Kailua is now more than two years old. At this point in time some conclusions as to the result can be gleaned from numerous personal interviews conducted in July 1975, which indicated an extremely high degree of lasting commitment to unity. It is believed that Christ Church will succeed because the people involved see their action as Christian witness to

the world that we are all one in Christ. They feel that similar unions can occur anywhere that Christians will open themselves completely to the love of Christ and the moving of the Holy Spirit.

The report is done with the following order in mind. First, we shall review our historical heritage with a view toward emphasizing those attitudes and value structures which enhance our hopes for union. Along with this historical review we will examine our cultural structures--including a brief but candid look at the present conditions. Second, we shall examine the theological imperative of the need for unity. Christ reconciling the world to God through one Faith is the one hope for the future of the church and the world. Finally, we shall report on the dynamics of the merger of the churches and how it was approached in the common life of the two congregations.

Some conclusions will be drawn which are different from the original thesis that the similarities in American Protestantism were sufficient to provide a firm foundation for some form of organic union. It is now felt that this was an exaggerated expectation. We now look to newer directions in unity which can and do exist within the diversity of American denominationalism. It has been difficult to come to this view. But we must submit to our present situation--continuing to strive for unity among the churches with undiminished hope.

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In Hebrews we are told to look to Jesus who is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

Christ was faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house if we hold fast our confidence and pride in our hope. Heb. 3:6.

CHAPTER 1

THE THREAD OF UNITY

THE STATE OF THE UNION

Despite the many similarities of the denominations, one of the major problems facing the church today is the quest for union. For those whose hopes have been founded in some form of organic reunion of the various polities, the future does not seem as bright as it did a decade ago when ecumenism was enjoying a position of greater priority than now. The future is brighter, perhaps, for those who oppose centralization and find satisfaction in the unity to be found in cooperation. It is the view of two Disciples of Christ historians, Tucker and McAllister that:

If the past and present give any solid clues as to the shape of the future, believers who pale at the prospect of a superchurch - encompassing all variations of Christian life and thought - have little reason to grow apprehensive in the United States of America.¹

It may very well be that the organic reunion of even a few of the denominations is an unreasonable expectation. On the other hand, there may be a form of unity already existing in the church which is even "more striking than its apparent diversity."² Is there not a thread of

¹William E. Tucker and Lester G. McAllister, *Journey in Faith* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1975), p. 19.

²H. Richard Niebuhr, et al, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry* (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 16.

unity which binds all Christendom together in a common faith in Christ and calls it to respond to a oneness in mission to serve the needs of our universe? What are our chances? The response to that oneness in mission is the imperative of the Christian faith. In the manner in which the church responds may be the answer to the quest for unity.

In order to analyze the clues of our past and our present history a reasonable attempt must be made to understand and appreciate our national religious heritage. A part of this understanding is a candid, objective assessment of our present condition. Early in the development of the thesis for this report a perhaps undue importance was placed upon the ecumenical value of the similarities in American denominationalism. It was the belief of this writer that this homogeneity was indicative of a much deeper commitment to union than subsequent events have borne out. It is true that the denominations have fostered many worthwhile expressions of Christian cooperation. Cooperation, however, is not necessarily unity, for it is also a fact that denominationalism has also fostered the sectarianism of race, class and locality that Richard Niebuhr deplored as the "ethical failure of the divided church."³

³H. Richard Niebuhr, *Social Sources of Denominationalism*, (Hamden, Conn.: The Shoe String Press, 1929),

It can be observed that a tension exists between this divided nature on the one hand and the apparent strengths which can be found in the power of the well-directed diversity of the church on the other. Is organic union more to be desired than the unity that exists in faith and worship? Is it necessary to effective unity in mission? At least a partial answer to these questions is to be found in an action taken by the Consultation on Church Union in 1973. In 1970, a plan for the union of the Church of Christ Uniting had been sent to the member churches for study and response.

As a consequence of this response...the Consultation took a new approach...from *designing* union at the top to *living* union at the local level.⁴

The purpose of this shift in thought was to establish a number of "generating communities" where congregations could develop their own structures as they lived and worked together toward fuller unity. At least at the local level there is that advantage of living and working together in a more visible form. It is also much more likely that there will be an identifiable common mission to share. More will be said later in regard to this shift in direction and its effect on a specific church merger.

⁴"Generating Communities: a Way Ahead in Church Union." (Princeton: Consultation on Church Union, 1973)

A UNION IN HAWAII

With this as a brief introduction, it will be the purpose of this paper to consider some of the common patterns in American Christianity and their influence on the ecumenical movement. The example for these observations will be reflected in the dynamics of the union of two congregations in Kailua, Hawaii. The churches that were joined were Christ Presbyterian Church, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, a member of the Presbytery of the Pacific, and Windward Christian Church/Disciples of Christ, an autonomous congregation affiliated with the national brotherhood known as the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ whose national offices are in Indianapolis, Indiana. On February 10th, 1974 they were merged into a united congregation under the name Christ Church, Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians in Kailua. Simultaneous to their unification it was announced that the Windward Coalition of Churches, of which both congregations were charter members, had been designated a generating community by the Consultation on Church Union.

At the outset it was hoped that the example of this unification would demonstrate a viable, albeit remote, possibility of denominational reunion. As has been indicated, time and events have modified that point of view. It is now believed that an organic reunion of the denominations

into one grand conglomerate is neither probable nor desirable in our current mood. Unions of congregations such as Christ Church, on the other hand, are possible and they are desirable. Local unifications will no doubt continue to occur as they have in the past. In some cases, the reasons will be spiritual and evangelistic; in others, the reasons will be practical and pragmatic. In some cases, there will be a mixture of these reasons. Some will succeed. Some will fail. Undergirding all such efforts as these which overcome traditional politics and doctrines in that special spirit of American Christianity which can unite the church where love of God and a desire for unity are the priorities.

THE AMERICAN SPIRIT

For those who shared in the union of Christ Church it proved to be a highly spiritual experience of response to God's will as they perceived it. There was, however, another factor present which was a spirit of another nature. It was the independent, self-assured, self-reliant confidence which Ronal Osborn refers to as the American Spirit. "Every nation has a spirit of its own, and that ethos, although it is profoundly affected by the faith of its people, imparts certain distinctive traits."⁵ In his book,

⁵Ronald E. Osborn, *The Spirit of American Christianity*, (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1958)pl.

The Spirit of American Christianity, Osborn delineates these certain traits which were characteristic of the American pioneer and which were to evolve into what would be seen as exemplifying the best American personality. In answering the challenge of the untamed, unpossessed frontier, the American became self-reliant, resourceful and dependable. Egalitarian in his views, he became a person of direct action, staunchly local in his concerns. He was restless and mobile, unbound by tradition, with an eager expectancy and faith in the future. A word of caution is surely needed:

Other factors have emerged to recast the American character and in some instances to alter it radically. Still certain of the frontier values persist in institutional form, especially in the life of our churches.⁷

But such was the cultural heritage and ethos which was to have such special impact on the unique quality of the growing American church.

THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

The new American was not only an individualist in response to the challenge of the New Land, he was an individualist in his attitude regarding the structure of the church. His sense of freedom which left him bound to no man demonstrably affected his relationship to the organization of the church. It could be said with accuracy that

⁶ibid., p. 3ff.

⁷ibid., p. 16.

Here religion demands but little of him; a small voluntary salary to the minister, and gratitude to God; can he refuse these? The American is a new man, who acts upon principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions.⁸

In short, adaptability to new environs, new conditions and new demands are part and parcel of the American heritage by virtue of the culture and its influence on religious expression.

Osborn's observation that certain frontier values still persist in the American culture was certainly evident in the mood of the congregation in Hawaii. This was true not only in terms of the national ethos as discussed above, but in the religious openness and acceptance as well. It was a distinct spirit of positive expectancy that greatly enhanced the possibility of successful union. But as Osborn has also said:

The distinctiveness of American Christianity arises only in part from the peculiarities of the American Spirit. The character of religious life in America also has been affected, and that most profoundly, by a political principal - the separation of church and state.⁹

What are some of the common patterns in the heritage of American Christianity which have been so profoundly affected

⁸St. Jean de Crevecoeur, "Letters from an American Farmer," Scully Bradley, et al, *The American Tradition in Literature* (New York: Norton, 1962), I, 153.

⁹Osborn, p. 27.

by this principle of religious freedom? How did this freedom and the voluntary principle which grew out of it serve to aid union in Hawaii two hundred years later?

From the earliest beginnings, the nature of the church in America was radically changed from that in Europe. One of the most alluring appeals of the New World was the opportunity for a new life. Then, even as now, it was a desire which permeated every aspect of the national experience, and had a most permanent influence on the American religious experience as well. In short, the sense of freedom and voluntarism which marked a person's loyalty to the nation also influenced his membership and commitment in the church. Citizens of a free state must needs have a free religion. This was possible in the New World as it had never been possible before - the opportunity for "a new beginning in a New Land."¹⁰ (In Kailua the new beginning was still a viable option.)

This new sense of freedom also measurably increased the importance of the latter, a factor which is still important in any attempt at ecumenical cooperation. As never before, the layman was able to participate in the decisions before the congregation. As a voluntary member of a voluntary society he wielded new power in the church. Sydney E.

¹⁰Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), p. 16.

Mead, demonstrating this new principle of religious liberty quotes Jefferson's definition of a church as

a voluntary society of men, joining themselves together of their own accord, in order to the public worshipping of God in such a manner as they deem acceptable to him and effectual to the salvation of their souls.

It is voluntary because no man is by nature bound to any church. The hope of salvation is the cause for his entering into it. If he finds anything wrong in it, he should be as free to go out as he was to come in.¹¹

The question was raised concerning the influence of the voluntary principle in the decision in Kailua. The heritage of religious mobility defined in Jefferson's definition was echoed in 1975 by Tucker and McAllister. It was also true in Hawaii in 1973 that

there is growing evidence, to be sure, indicating that denominational peculiarities no longer capture and hold the undivided attention of church people. In significant numbers they attend the suburban sanctuary nearest them and move without pangs of conscience from one denomination to another with a different heritage in policy and tradition.¹²

Another significant result of the new freedom in America was the breakdown of the parish system. Being far removed from the seats of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, with no officialdom near at hand to control or supervise the activities of the churches, a new sense of independence became characteristic of American Christianity. People were no longer automatically members of any specific church, nor

¹¹Sydney E. Mead, *The Lively Experiment*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 58.

¹²Tucker, pp. 19, 20.

submissive to its discipline. Being independent they now had to be "won" to the church. Being individualistic they had to be convinced. Being localist in their orientation, they had to be persuaded into memberships that served *local* needs. In order to exist and perpetuate itself the church now had to "gather" its constituency from a largely un-churched population. As Winthrop S. Hudson has observed:

The technique of the "gathered churches" is a key phrase, for it calls attention to the necessity that was laid upon the churches to win recruits and gain support by voluntary means... . The vigorous and evangelistic and instructional activity imposed upon the churches by their status as gathered churches of convinced believers was to become one of the most distinctive features of American church life.¹³

A major aspect of this feature in church life was the necessity for the individual clergyman to provide the significant impetus for organization by his own personality and power of persuasion. This facet of the common pattern of American Christianity is perhaps as much in evidence today as then. It is most certainly a key consideration in the mobility between denominations referred to by Tucker and McAllister. The influence of clergy leadership on church unions will be discussed more fully in following pages. The point of emphasis here is the now-accepted multi-traditional growth of American Christianity. In Kailua, no attempt was made to determine the variety of denominations represented in the two congregations, but

¹³Hudson, p. 16.

they were numerous.

AUTONOMY AND FELLOWSHIP

A further consequence of the new freedom was the emphasis on localism alluded to above. Winthrop S. Hudson states it in the following words:

Whatever the denomination and whatever the polity that was ostensibly professed, all the colonial churches tended to be characterized by a strong emphasis upon local autonomy and lay control.¹⁴

At first glance this would appear to be in tension with the depth of influence required by clergymen in the concept of the gathered church. Clergy influence and lay control, however, are not mutually exclusive concepts and may have, in fact, reinforced the local autonomy in its association with the national polity to which it was affiliated. (This heritage of autonomy was to have a strong bearing on the eventual union of the churches in Kailua.)

The local expression had long been emphasized in the interaction between faith and culture. It was characteristic of the development of the nation and of the church; it is characteristic of the nation and the church today. Hudson even includes Roman Catholicism under the umbrella of localism, even in the twentieth century, citing diocesan ownership of all church property as a method of putting "a limitation upon local lay power."¹⁵ Whether there is any

¹⁴ibid., p. 14.

¹⁵ibid.

real autonomy in the more hierarchical polities is not a point for debate here. Freedom of expression within these polities will be discussed in another section. However, H. Richard Niebuhr does make the point in support of Hudson that

it is a part of the nature of the American Church that it is both protestant and catholic. There is much historic Protestantism in those institutions that are called Catholic and much historic Catholicism in those institutions that are called Protestant.¹⁶

In short, American Christianity is marked by a special brand of denominationalism that is uniquely American in character. It is at once individualistic and autonomous and open and accepting. It is egalitarian in concept. It has been aptly stated by Sydney E. Ahlstrom that

in one sense denominationalism is the most available term for the religious situation created in a land of many Christian churches and sects when none of them occupies a privileged situation and each has an equal claim to the status as a Christian community in the eyes of the law.¹⁷

In the religious experience in America the preceding statement could have been appended with the phrase "and in the attitudes of the people."

This concept of religious freedom which culminated in the disestablishment of the American churches was the outgrowth of certain attitudes and conditions present in the New World during and prior to the revolutionary era.

¹⁶Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church*, preface.

¹⁷Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 381.

This principle of religious liberty had been formally recognized in Maryland and Rhode Island at the time of their founding in the 1630's. By 1775, it was a fundamental expression of American Christianity. Denominationalism was a natural outgrowth of this ideal of freedom, but it was marked by a new understanding and acceptance which transcended denominational affiliations. This spirit of acceptance was boldly stated by John Wesley when he said:

I...refuse to be distinguished from other men but by the common principle of Christianity...I renounce and detest all other marks of distinction. But from real Christians of whatever denomination, I desire not to be distinguished at all.... Dost thou love and fear God? It is enough. I give thee the right hand of fellowship.¹⁸

In the merger negotiations between the two churches in Kailua these common principles of Christianity and the spirit of loving fellowship provided a sound foundation for the unity of the congregations. Such a base was essential, for the early years of the seventies were also a time of discord and protest.

CHAOS AND CONCORD

A mere recitation of the historical similarities which characterize American Protestantism and impart its unique spirit is not sufficient to assure one that Christian unity has a smooth road ahead. The same individualism and independence of nature which makes the American embrace to the death the cause he espouses also makes him resist to

¹⁸ibid.

the death that to which he is opposed. In other words, the same traits which have brought about cooperation and unity have also been responsible for the fragmentation and parochialism evident in certain aspects of American denominationalism. The church has been condemned for its sectarianism, for its many stratifications because of sectional, social, economic and ethical attitudes.

Much of H. R. Niebuhr's 1929 thesis of the social nature of the Christian church and the ethical problems of denominationalism remains valid. In 1954 Niebuhr wrote that he "continued to believe in the central thesis of *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*."¹⁹ The legitimacy of his concern about the evil of divisiveness and cultural accommodation was strikingly evident in the dissidence and protest of the late sixties and early seventies. Those were dark days of religious ferment in America. The mood of "anti-establishment" which lashed out so strongly at traditional structures did not exclude the church from its protest:

The new religious ferment was multi-form and it had some common characteristics...the category as a whole belonged within the category of "protest religion."²⁰

Efforts at union were tremendously affected as the church reeled under attack and attempted to deal with issues both old and new - racism, amnesty, abortion, birth control, black awareness, women in ministry and many others.

¹⁹Niebuhr, *Social Sources*, Preface ²⁰Hudson, p. 424

The congregations in Kailua were not unaware nor unaffected by the tensions and dissensions which pervaded the religious scene. The Presbyterian Church in the United States had withdrawn from the Consultation on Church Union. Many religious leaders felt that church reunion was a dead issue. In 1973 Winthrop S. Hudson wrote, "the story of the quest for church union is briefly told."²¹ He felt that the withdrawal of the Presbyterians had dealt a crippling blow to COCU. Further, the "scales had been tipped" against union. Defection of support from the liberal camp and a growing fear of centralization had closed the door to union. Or had it?

In December 1973, two months before the union of Christ Church in Kailua, Paul A. Crow Jr., then secretary of the Consultation on Church Union, delivered a sermon in San Francisco entitled "If not the reunion of Christ's Church...then what?" In that sermon he made an appeal for the reunion of the church at the congregational level thus achieving union at the national level. The experience of the consultation had shown the capability of general agreement on matters of faith, worship and ministry. There was no such capability for the determining of structure. COCU, as mentioned earlier, shifted directions. If reunion at the top was a fading possibility, Christian ecumenism was still a predominant feature of the church. It is the

²¹ibid., p. 410.

"unity which our faith possesses despite its variety... which molds culture instead of being molded by it."²² Due to this fact, it was determined that union would be much more plausible at the grass roots level as congregations undertook the development of structures that would evolve naturally as they lived and worked together in faith and mission. "Ecumenism, then, is more than a recognition of similarity. It is a oneness in mission."²³

The new direction in union was one which fit the scene in Hawaii. Despite all the upheaval in the church and the temporary delay of organic union by COCU, the congregations in Kailua saw in their oneness of mission an opportunity to witness to Christian Unity in a period of general disunity. Undergirding their effort to overcome their traditional polities and doctrines was that special spirit of American Christianity which will overcome all the obstacles to unity when a desire for unity is the priority.

So far we have been concentrating on the national ethos and its influence on the churches. We have sought to demonstrate that unity is attainable where there is a will to achieve it. It would be apropos, now, to consider some of the social elements of the American people and

²²H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Kingdom of God in America*, (Hamden, Conn: The Shoe String Press, 1956), Preface.

²³Ronald E. Osborn, Personal Interview, School of Theology at Claremont, California, 1974.

their possible influences on unity in the church. In the following pages we shall refer to Robert Lee's *Social Sources of Church Unity*, published in 1960. In his book, Lee's thesis was "that the increase in church unity springs in considerable measure from the pressures of a growing cultural unity within American Society."²⁴ In this treatise Lee had formulated the belief that the social factors which had previously contributed to a proliferation in the churches had been transformed so as to encourage unity rather than divisiveness in contemporary American Protestantism. He spoke of the "emergence of a common-core Protestantism...as a great sign of growing church unity."²⁵

Cultural conformity and a common-core faith were the basic components for the "dawning of the church unity movement in America". Lee said:

Our time is a moment in history in which religious forces have converged with social factors, such as race, class, sectionalism, nationalism and the various patterns of unity, to produce a very imposing movement of church unity.²⁶

While many of the hopes of Lee's "dawning" have faded in the full light of the ensuing fifteen years of ecumenical history, it is the belief of this writer that his basic tenets still have viable meanings for church unity although in a new direction. It has been observed

²⁴Robert Lee, *The Social Sources of Church Unity*, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 17.

²⁵*ibid.*, p. 83.

²⁶*ibid.*, p. 224.

above that H. R. Niebuhr's thesis of divisiveness also remains valid. Running concurrently, as they do, in the socio-religious expression in America, each crisis in the church becomes equally an opportunity for division or unity.

Having briefly examined the religious protest movements of the past decade which some churchmen feel "have for the most part been responded to in varying degrees"²⁷ let us look at the positive residue of Lee's thesis on the prospects of unity.

CULTURAL CONFORMITY

In spite of the upheavals which have been so much a part of the recent social scene there has been an obvious reduction of social differences. Shifting patterns of social relationships are often born out of conflict. A dramatic example of this has been the civil rights movement which has improved minority status in the U.S. This is not to say that the battle has been won, but the over-all scene is marked by a decided change in the direction of "greater equality and wider application of the national policy on equal rights."²⁸ While this has been expressed strongly by ethnic separatism, there are also evidences of racial unity

²⁷Osborn, personal interview, *ibid.* Osborn feels that the church's response has not been as complete as it should be in all areas.

²⁸Lee, p. 27.

in the church. One example of this is the First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ in Lynwood, California, a racially mixed congregation served by a Black pastor.²⁹ A rising influx of Black students in predominantly white seminaries is another sign of lessening racial discrimination. The point must be made that other ethnic minority mixes could be demonstrated. The Black/Caucasian example merely points to more extreme reduction in social differences.

A second indication of cultural conformity has been indicated by a tremendous expansion in the so-called "middle class". Upward occupational mobility has been a fact of the industrial revolution and technological progress.

Technological changes, the expansion of the American economy and changes in the methods of business management have ushered in a large corps of middle class workers to handle the administrative, office, and paper work . . . ³⁰

Numerous social studies are available to demonstrate this phenomenon, but it is our purpose to relate it to the significance it has for church unity. The point is that as more and more people are able to share in the same goods and services, life styles become more alike. This results in cultural conformity and forms a nucleus for common values. As these common values are reflected in the life of the church, barriers to unity will be easier to overcome.

²⁹Other examples are the United Christian Church, Los Angeles and McCarty Memorial Christian Church, Los Angeles.

³⁰Lee, p. 33.

A direct effect of the upward occupational mobility which blurs our class distinctions is regional mobility. Fewer and fewer Americans are bound to traditional family occupations and the places of their birth. Rapid industrial growth and urbanization have all but removed the extended family ties that were so evident in our early history. Modern means of transportation, communication and the increased personal contact stimulated by population mobility has done much to do away with regional identifications and sectional differences. New attitudes develop which are consonant with the new milieu, and social homogeneity is attained which is more national than sectional.

Although the present rates of residential mobility are not high enough to indicate that every person is moving or migrating every year, they are so high that the annual volume of movement involves millions of persons. Over a period of only a few years, mobility involves a majority of the population; over a period of a lifetime, it involves almost everybody.³¹

As sectional differences are blurred by residential mobility, denominational loyalties will also lessen, thereby enhancing possibilities of Christian unity.

The last aspect of cultural conformity to be examined is the process of assimilation in American life which has contributed so greatly to national ethos. As

³¹Donald J. Bogue, "Internal Migration and Residential Mobility", in James Price (ed.) *Social Facts, Introductory Readings* (London: Macmillan, 1969), p. 523.

Margaret Mead has aptly stated "we are all third generation Americans". This is not to say that there are none who stand outside the melting-pot. What is true is that, for the most part, purely ethnic societies are not typical. Through the process of social interaction, mutual dependence and a common language, most national ethnic origins have been lost in the mainstream of the American culture. That the assimilation is not complete is well-attested by the American Indian on the reservation and the Black and the Hispanic American in the ghetto. In the main, however, substantial blending into the culture has been made by all groups. Culturally and psychologically they have become Americans. This phase of our national development lags the most for the highly "visible" minority ethnic groups mentioned above. As such, it needs the deepest, most sensitive attention of the Church where unity is the goal.

It may be noted in the preceding analysis of our society that Lee has followed H. R. Niebuhr's indices set forth in *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*. These represent, for Lee, the four areas of most dynamic social change. This writer has sought to highlight that portion of Lee's thesis still relevant for today's ecumenicity. The complexity of the social structures and inter-relationships that define our mutual existence is staggering. Yet as Lee says:

These persistent, relatively stable and organized patterns of relationships are woven into our daily existence often without conscious recognition on our part.³³

He sorts these shared relationships into six dominant influences: (1) mass communications, (2) commonly-held values, (3) common styles of life, (4) mutual social dependence, (5) organizational revolution, and (6) symbols of national unity. All of these mutually-experienced influences are signs of our growing cultural unity. For the most part, these are self-evident characteristics of American life and need no further discussion. (Notable exceptions have been pointed out above.) However, since no mention has been made regarding the symbols of national unity it would be well to devote this sentence to holidays, national heroes, baseball, the Super Bowl and the Bicentennial celebration. All of these symbols serve the society's need for collective representation of uniformly-held ideas and sentiments which exemplify its unity. The same philosophy of collective sentiment can be applied to the symbols which represent the common faith of the church, that is to say, the Lamb, the Dove, the Candle and the Cross.

Widely shared, definable, common characteristics gave rise to what might be called a common core Protestantism--a faith and practice which evolved not as the exclusive province of any single group.³⁴

³³ibid.

³⁴Cf. Douglas Horton, "Now the United Church of Christ", *Christian Century*, LXXIV (June 12, 1957), 733.

According to Lee:

Closer harmony in thought and practices, and a liberal sharing among the major groups of American Protestantism has been increasingly apparent.³⁵

In supporting this idea of a common-core Protestantism, Dr. Lee discusses five aspects of the church that support his contention.

First he refers to what he calls doctrinal consensus. It is important to note again at this point that when the Consultation on Church Union undertook to develop a plan of union for the churches they showed general agreement on matters of faith, worship and ministry. This would tend to undergird the accuracy of the theory of doctrinal consensus. Today's inter-denominational seminaries such as the School of Theology where students from various traditions study from the same textbooks and under the same professors would indicate that doctrinal consensus may become even more pronounced.

The second characteristic of the common-core is the interchangeability of membership. This has long been a recognized characteristic of the American church and was noted earlier in this paper (pp. 7-8). Much of this is due to population mobility which places a person in a community in which there is no church of his denomination. Of equal importance, however, are certain lay values:

³⁵Lee, p. 83.

In the scale of lay values such items as a "friendly minister," "convenient neighborhood location", or a "good Sunday School for the kids", hold greater priority than preference for a particular denominational allegiance.³⁶

In short, lay values may be of more importance than doctrine when the "new" resident begins "shopping" for a church in his new locale. That denominational loyalties are secondary to other values is a major basis for hopes for church unity as congregations become multi-traditional. Long-established associations to a certain location can certainly be a hindrance to unification when one of the buildings has to be abandoned.

The church today is also characterized by a certain fluidity among the clergy. Denominational crossing is certainly made easier by the shared educational backgrounds and associations that develop in the seminaries as we have noted. It is also probable that many ministers have been members of more than one denomination prior to their decision to enter the ministry. At that point, pragmatic considerations for career development may cause considerable movement toward better opportunities. All of this makes both the laity and the clergy more receptive to unification.

All of these factors, coupled with the emerging similarity of organizational structure has combined to produce a certain religious ethos which is conducive to union. As surely as the American has developed a national ethos

³⁶ibid.

that gives him certain social and political values so has the growth of American Christianity produced a definable religious ethos which gives him certain religious values. Strict denominational loyalties do not seem to be a major part of that ethos. In fact, the average church member may not even be aware of the distinctions which separate the denominations.

Cultural homogeneity, however conducive to cooperation it may be, is not sufficient impetus to church union; nor is the mere fact of a common religious ethos. The generating dynamic toward viable church union will not come out of the culture. It must come from the church's response to the divine imperative of the Gospel; that is, to work unceasingly toward that unity which is oneness with each other in Christ.

CHAPTER 2

THE DIVINE IMPERATIVE

What is meant by the term "the divine imperative of the Gospel"? As the congregations in Kailua lived, worked and worshipped together, a sense of urgency began to permeate the negotiations. It was as though what we were doing had an air of unavoidability. Union became the only acceptable option. From the very beginning, the committee for unity had sought scriptural bases to encourage the union. Each worship service included a "moment for unity" at which a scripture was read, including a statement on unification. The theology was consistently a theology of oneness and unity. It was a oneness that was two-fold in nature. First the congregations earnestly desired the spiritual benefits of being unified and secondly they saw their union as a visible statement to the community in response to the Gospel.

Two scriptures became watchwords as the negotiations advanced: John 17:20-21, Christ's prayer that we all be one, and Ephesians 1:9-10, God's plan for the fulness of time that we all be united in Him.

THE PRAYER OF CHRIST

I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may also be in us, so that the world may believe that thou has sent me.
(RSV, John 17:20-21.)

In a sense the prayer of Christ that "they may all be one" in the way that He was in the Father and the Father in him may seem at first to be a different unity than that discussed in the preceding chapter. While the unity of believers which is stressed in the prayer indicates a spiritual unity like the oneness of the Father and the Son, it also goes beyond to a visible unity. This visible unity is necessary "so that the world may believe." It contains, then, a divine message that the followers of Christ have received simultaneous to the gift of unity with Christ and God. The message is that the nature of God is revealed in Christ and that through Christ the world is reconciled to God.

The prayer has sometimes been called Christ's "High Priestly Prayer", a term that indicates what John seems to imply--namely, that in the prayer Christ consecrated the church to its life and task in the world.¹

¹Howard C. Kee, et al., *Understanding the New Testament* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 353.

The further observation is stressed that the task of the church was not to cease with Jesus' death, but was to continue throughout the life and history of the church. As George Vanderlip puts it, it could be called a "didactic prayer".² Beyond the prayer for unity is the theological message of the meaning of Christ referred to above. Seen as the task of Christianity throughout the life and history of the church it becomes "a unity of mind and purpose... that is sought."³

Hans Conzelmann states:

If the Church lives as an enclosed brotherhood, then its existence is still confrontation of the world with revelation, and along with it, the offer of faith.⁴

In Kailua, the evangelistic nature of unity was one of the most important factors contributing to the desire for unity. There was an atmosphere of consecration to the spiritual expression that could be made beyond a oneness of structure. In short, there was an internal as well as external experience of being one body in Christ.

There is a question present in some theological quarters concerning the presence or absence of ecclesiological concerns in the Fourth Gospel. This is not reason to conclude that Jesus' prayer was unrelated to the faithful

²D. George Vanderlip, *Christianity According to John* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), p. 83.

³ibid.

⁴Hans Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 356.

of the future. To the contrary, Jesus had prayed for harmony among his disciples even as he prayed for those who would believe because of them. This seems to be a clear reference to the evangelical task of the believers who were to follow. The effectiveness of this evangelical mission is largely dependent upon the nature of the unity within the community.

The call is no less clear today. The unity which the church seeks must be in response to its mission of reconciliation in the world. The church must seek unity because unity is the very nature and will of God. It goes beyond the union of human organizational structures to the true gift of divine love which is the salvation of humankind. As Ernest Saunders reminds us:

Christ's concern widens to embrace not only the small company of his followers but the whole number of those who will be brought to faith and life as the mission continues in the world.⁵

BASES FOR UNITY

If the prayer of Christ was for the unity of his followers then the mission he set before them was for the unity of the world. Is it possible that the church can find that unity in its present form?

Andre Dumas says of the church:

⁵Ernest W. Saunders, *John Celebrates the Gospel* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 138.

For its unity depends not so much on the capacity of the Church to spread out into all natures and cultures but on the very name of the God who calls the Church into being and is the only true God of the whole earth.⁶

The unity of the church is not in the universality of its influence but in the uniqueness of its source. For Professor Dumas there are four classic bases for the unity of the church. They are deputyship, centred diversity, bodiliness and fulness. None of these is dependent on organic structure, but they do reflect the common nature of the faith, mission, and purpose of the church.

When Dumas speaks of deputyship he refers to that responsibility of the church to share a common faith and worship. The Church is God's deputy and his spokesman to the world. It is not merely the process of assembling people to recognize their similarities, he says, but a matter of helping them to acknowledge that the object of their faith "extends to the ends of the earth and to the end of time."⁷ It is affirmation before the world that there is one God who is Father of us all and that our oneness should reflect this oneness.

The question arises as to how effectively that affirmation can be made given the diversity present in the church. As Saunders observes "evidence of rivalry is a hindrance to the effectiveness of the Church's mission in

⁶Andre Dumas, "Unity of Mankind--Unity of the Church", *Study Encounter*, X:2 (1974), 1.

⁷saunders, p. 139.

the world. We are reminded of Paul's words to the Romans: "It is right not...to do anything that makes your brother stumble." (14:21) Thus it becomes important, as it was in Kailua, to make visible the inner unity of faith.

It has been said that the unity of the church is inherent in the uniqueness of its source. All movement in the church is to that one center which is common to all. It is the context in which the letter to the Ephesians speaks of the Church:

There is just one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.⁸

Existent within this unity of faith and Lordship is the diversity of gifts which are given for the work of the ministry--the mission of the church in the world. Central to this concept is the idea that the relationship of the believers to one another is of more importance than the form of the organization. Diversity is "for the building up of the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith" (Eph. 4:12-13).

When Andre Dumas used the term "centred diversity" he referred to the "centre represented by the fundamental apostolic witness to Jesus Christ."⁹ It is not, then, a diversity to be recognized and respected independently. It must declare the will of God to be in all and through all.

"Christianity is always more than human endeavor.

⁸R.S.V.

⁹Dumas, p. 3.

At best our work is response to God's working."¹⁰ Christian unity, then, is also a response to God's working in us, not upon a social need for formulating agreeable societies. When the believer responds to the encounter of God in the affirmative, personal autonomy is lost in the sovereignty of Christ. In this manner, the believer becomes a member of the communion which is the church. The church, however, is not the savior. Rather, it is the community of those who have been saved. Saying that the believer loses his autonomy is not to say that he loses his worth. To the contrary, by the diversity of the gifts which are received through grace a fuller sharing becomes possible in the body of Christ. As Dumas states:

The metaphor of the body...is essential if we are to understand the mutual cohesion of the many members and the dignity possessed by each of them.¹¹

In the theology of the church using the metaphor of the body, Christ is the head. Paul says "we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head--into Christ, from whom the whole body joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love."
(Eph. 4:15, 16.)

¹⁰Andrew W. Blackwood, Jr., *The Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1962), p. 160.

¹¹Dumas, pp. 3, 4.

Once again we are impressed by the divine imperative to unity in love if the task of the church is to be fulfilled. The church is a bodily unity and all of its members are part of a collective whole. If, then, the nature of the body is oneness, then its proclamation to the world must be oneness--a visible unity of reconciling love. This unity declares to a fragmented and disparate world, "by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews of Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). "Earnestly desire the higher gifts," Paul says, "and I will show you a still more excellent way." (1 Cor. 12:31.)

A NEED FOR UNITY

The church is the one supreme true answer to the alienations which demoralize our society--alienations in part due to the duality of the ethos referred to in our introduction and which began with a political principle, that is, the separation of church and state. It became a facet of the religious ethos. As has been maintained, there are certain major characteristics of American Christianity which though social in nature are theological in impact.

The United States was the first nation in the world to make the separation of the church and state a requirement of its foundation and a part of its Constitution.

Several aspects of this principle of freedom which has so profoundly affected the church will be reiterated here in a different context--progressive autonomy.

First it must be observed that this guaranteed the church a certain autonomy within the structure of the society. The church functioned within its own sense of meaning free from any fear that laws could be enacted to restrict or inhibit religious expression. As a free church, though, its membership was voluntary.

Second, membership and participation in the church on the basis of free choice gave the individual member of the church a high degree of autonomy within the society of the church. If the association was reasonable and acceptable, the member maintained a degree of loyalty. If it was not, he simply withdrew and found a more suitable atmosphere. The church was not subject to the judgment of the government and the individual member began to see himself as not subject to ecclesiastical judgment.

Added to this was the early attitude of localism in which increased control of church affairs was being placed into the hands of the laity. Increasingly the focus of religious experience in America was on the values and concerns in the life of the individual congregation. The majority of lay persons in the church were for the most part unconcerned with denominational development and there

was a high degree of resistance to hierarchical domination. Church historians and sociologists observe that all American churches are, in effect, congregational, whatever polity they formally espouse."¹² In short, they are psychologically, if not in fact, autonomous from their national structure insofar as the congregational life is concerned.

What has this progression of autonomy--church from state, congregation from polity, and member from congregation--brought us to? Is the next step to be autonomy from God? Having seen ourselves as nation-makers and church-makers, will we become God-makers? It is the view of this writer that one result of this progression can be observed in the structure of our society most inextricably woven into our culture--the family.

Large numbers of young people today feel a strong sense of autonomy within the family group. Much of this is due to social factors which break down the home and fragment its members: divorce, working mothers, television in every room, a car for every driver, alcoholism, drug abuse, to name a few. Double moral standards have caused the young to cry "hypocrite" at their parents and they demand the right to make their own decisions about their values and their ethical structures. Feeling a deep sense of abandonment, they seek meaning for their life in radical ways.

¹²"Response to a Plan of Union for the Church of Christ Uniting", *Christian* CX:33 (August 13, 1973), 5.

Torn by the moral contradiction of their existence and fearful of the expectations of an increasingly complex society they search for meaning--for understanding, for guidance--for love. The church must respond to that search for meaning by living and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ by a unity of spirit and love.

A PLAN FOR THE FULNESS OF TIME

For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight, the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. (Eph. 1:9-10.)

Christ is the steward to whose administration the father has committed the carrying out of his gracious purpose.¹³

Nothing is more evident in God's plan for the unity of all things than the centrality of Jesus Christ and the redeeming nature of his ministry. It is a plan of redemption, and therefore union, which is continuing in time. It was set in motion in the beginning, in eternity, according to God's purpose. In Christ, as the head of the church, that purpose is to be revealed to the world in the "fulness" of time. Interpretations vary on the point of the meaning in time. For Andre Dumas, fulness of time is eschatological. For him the unity of the church is a coming fulness. The forms of unity in his discussion are characteristic of

¹³Blackwood, p. 106.

a unity not yet completed. William Hendriksen says:

When all the preceding times and seasons which the Father has set within his own authority have been completed. In other words at the appropriate time.¹⁴

The variety of interpretations indicates the degree of difficulty in arriving at a concept of the shade of meaning intended.

The consensus is that the eternal process of God's reconciling plan was "put into practical effect in space-time, through the Incarnation, when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."¹⁵ In short, in whatever way time is interpreted the Revelation of God in Christ is the mystery hidden for the ages but now revealed to the world. This is the continuing proclamation of the church.

In these days, as the church's attention is shifted to global concerns--to the conditions of people in all parts of the world--a great sense of urgency presses upon the church. Unity is imperative if it is to solve the problems that confront it--global hunger, depletion of resources, disparity in the quality of life, oppression, aggression, racism, sexism--the list is staggering. Beyond these, there exists the need for a global spiritual environment which translates into a caring love for all living beings. God has commanded that the church permeate the world with

¹⁴William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967)

¹⁵Blackwood, p. 106.

a spirit of divine love.

Its purpose is the revelation to men of their potential childhood to the Father and their possible brotherhood with each other.¹⁶

This, then, is the divine imperative of the church that we love God with all our heart, mind and purpose and our neighbor as ourself. The whole world is our neighbor and if we are to realize our potential as children of the Father the church must set aside all the impediments to its mission and be about the Father's business. Christianity must recommit itself to all possible unity with all possible haste. The church cannot disclaim its responsibility to the conditions of the present time. It must no longer delay the healing message of loving unity.

¹⁶H. Richard Niebuhr, *Social Sources of Denominationalism* (Hamden, CT: Shoe String Press, 1954), p. 278.

CHAPTER 3

THE PLAN FOR UNITY

THE NATURE OF THE MISSION

Presbyterians in Hawaii

Warren Studer, pastor of Christ Church, Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians in Kailua, Hawaii, often refers to the union of Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church in this way: "We were on a collision course in worship and mission from our very beginnings. The history of the two congregations bears this out."

The Presbyterian Church is relatively new to the Hawaiian scene, the first congregation having been organized in 1959. Because of increasing numbers of Presbyterians beginning to live in Hawaii, the large military population of the island and rising tourism during the '40's and '50's, more and more people were asking the question "Where is the Presbyterian Church in Hawaii?" In response to this growing need, the Synod of Southern California made a study of the Hawaiian situation. A decision was made to establish a Presbyterian church in Hawaii and in 1958 property was purchased in Honolulu. In January 1959, First Presbyterian Church of Honolulu, with 187 charter members and its organizing pastors, held its first worship service. At the present, First Presbyterian Church, Honolulu has

some six hundred members.

By 1962, it became apparent that substantial residential development was occurring on the Windward side of Oahu. In addition to this, there was a large military installation on the Windward side--the Marine Corps Air Station at Kaneohe. Another study at that time resulted in the formation of Christ Presbyterian Church. CPC's first worship services were held on November 10, 1963 in Kailua High School. Formal organization was accomplished in February 1964 with charter members numbering 115. Warren Studer came as pastor in September 1968. At the time of the merger, CPC had grown to slightly over 200 members.

A third church which is Presbyterian in form was organized in central Oahu at Mililani Town in 1970. Although it is a community church in which other denominations share, its pastor is Presbyterian and the church is responsible to the Presbytery of the Pacific and to the Synod of Southern California. Mililani Church has a community center and day care facility. It was formed to meet the needs of the local people. It is more ethnically mixed than the other Presbyterian churches on Oahu.

Disciples in Hawaii

The Disciples of Christ had an earlier beginning in Hawaii, but by 1950 were essentially on the same track as the Presbyterians. First Christian Church, Disciples of

Christ in Honolulu was established in 1894 by a small group of 11 original members. Through the years it has remained fairly small--225 members in 1975--but mission-oriented. It was due to this congregation that the formation of Windward Christian Church was made possible. In 1959, under the leadership of its pastor, George Jacobs, First Christian Church, Honolulu sought to establish a Disciples of Christ church on the Windward side.

Windward Christian Church was conceived in the minds of members of First Christian Church to answer a two-fold need. First, to serve those members of the older congregation who resided on the Windward side, and second, though perhaps primarily, to minister to the growing numbers of military personnel attached to the Marine Corps Air Station at Kaneohe. From this beginning, with a few members from the Honolulu church, WCC grew to a peak membership of 150 members. The bulk of this membership was military personnel. The constant mobility created by transfers was a constant feature of the life of the congregation. In the late 1960's, military cutbacks seriously reduced the military component at Kaneohe and WCC lost more than half of its membership. At the time of the merger, WCC showed a participating membership of 78, but only about 40 who were strongly active. WCC had its first worship service in Kailua in January 1960. In January 1974 the indomitable remnant voted to unit with Christ Presbyterian in ecumenical

witness to Christian unity. More is to be said later concerning this.

Like the Presbyterians, the Disciples of Christ in Hawaii also had a congregation in central Oahu at Wahiawa. Established in February 1954, Wahiawa Christian Church had served the Filipino community in the middle of the island. While Wahiawa is heavily oriented to the sugar industry and cane growing, the church has also served the military community. Its membership of about 125 is about half military and half Filipino.

Both denominations also had state's organizations designed for mutual support and program cooperation. The three Presbyterian churches were joined together in the Hawaii Presbyterian Council. The three Christian Churches were cooperating with each other in the state organization known as Disciples of Christ in Hawaii. In 1969, these histories found a mutual expression in the Windward Coalition of Churches.

Windward Coalition of Churches

The Windward Coalition of Churches, Kailua, Hawaii, was formed by the following congregations in 1969:

Christ Presbyterian Church
Emmanuel Episcopal Church
Kailua Christian Church / Independent Christian
Kailua United Methodist Church
Keolumana United Methodist Church
St. Christopher's Episcopal Church

St. John's by the Sea Catholic Church¹
 St. John's Lutheran Church
 Waimanalo United Methodist Church
 Windward Christian / Disciples of Christ
 Windward United Church of Christ

In the Coalition's efforts for ecumenical expression, certain goals had been developed. What those goals were and their relative degrees of achievement have been the subject of several evaluations and critiques. In the discussion that follows I shall summarize some of these findings.

Along with this summary there will be some conclusions drawn from my own year of experience in the Coalition process. (Participation in the Coalition had a profound influence upon the union of Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church. It also has significance for the overall ecumenical movement.)

In 1971, an evaluation of the Windward Coalition of Churches was made by the Consulting Organization, San Francisco, California, George W. Barrett, Director. It was in the ensuing report, "The End of the Beginning--an Evaluation of the Windward Coalition of Churches, Oahu, Hawaii", October 1971 that the Coalition's goals were clarified.²

¹Catholic involvement was selective and sporadic.

²"The End of the Beginning--an Evaluation of the Windward Coalition of Churches, Oahu, Hawaii" was conducted in the Fall of 1971 to assess the progress of the Coalition, to identify its major goals and to consider viable options for the future. The Coalition is now in its seventh year and many of its organizational deficiencies still exist. In spite of this, it still makes positive ecumenical witness in worship and mission.

The first goal identified was to create means and opportunities for deeper spiritual development. In the life of the Coalition, the most visible means for this process was seen in worship. As was observed by Richard R. Hadley, Chairman, Coalition Worship Committee:

Worship was a central part of joint coalition activities which is all the more meaningful since worship is the central act of the Christian community.³

Numerous joint worship activities were becoming annual celebrations in the Coalition--the problem is that they were usually associated with obviously ecumenically oriented holy days--for example, Easter Sunrise, Good Friday, Thanksgiving Day and special Advent services. Many other good ideas failed for lack of support. Eugene S. Werhli was prompted to say:

I am impressed by the abundance of good ideas that are recorded in Coalition papers and that are continually expressed and generated... . The trouble is that so few of the good ideas ever get executed.⁴

The major problem was organizational. The responsibility for programs was seldom clearly defined and usually resulted from motivated volunteers.

Even so, the Barrett group was able to report a strong sense of community out of their interviews with Coalition laypersons.

³Richard Hadley "Report to the Executive Directorate, Windward Coalition of Churches", May 1973, p. 6.

⁴Eugene R. Werhli, "The Report of the Theologian-in-Residence, Windward Coalition of Churches", Dec. 28, 1972.

A growing sense of community is evident among the more active members of the churches--"We know each other better", "We are still together", "I feel that the other churches are mine too"--were among some of the comments heard.⁵

It is worthwhile to note the designation of "active" to the sense of community. The Barrett researchers were to find this spirit existing in the clergy with a pastor "ministering to and relating to people in congregations not his own."⁶ In short, community and/or unity is active participation in a broader experience. The Coalition provided the opportunity. Frequently it also generated the impetus.

A second goal so interrelated to the first that it requires little additional comment was to broaden and enrich worship. For those who were active in the programs referred to above, enrichment was a natural achievement. Even with its apparent imperfections there was a widened sense of unity among and within the churches of the Coalition. For many, there was a growing second identity beyond his denomination--membership in the Coalition.

Another aim of the Coalition was to enable the clergy to increase mutual trust and support in order to exercise their ministry cooperatively. There were some limitations. One of these was the inability for Coalition

⁵Donald Barrett, "The End of the Beginning, an Evaluation of the Windward Coalition of Churches," October 1971, p. 6.

⁶ibid.

clergy to effectively bridge the gap between the "mainline" ministers and the conservative or evangelically oriented.

In his report to the Coalition in 1975, Eugene Carson Blake, a theologian-in-residence, wrote:

Finally, the Coalition ought to be dissatisfied with the permanent and even increasing division between itself and the so-called conservative and evangelical churches in Kailua.⁷

Among the clergy in the Coalition there were two conservative ministers. Full cooperation was never quite achieved. It is perhaps significant that, though both churches are still in the Coalition, they are now served by "new" pastors.⁸ On the other hand, there were many occasions of cross-congregational ministry. This was particularly true of vacation coverage. Coalition ministers shared all of the pastoral functions of their absent colleagues with little apparent resistance from the laity. For example, this writer, a Disciple, spent a month as minister on call to St. Christopher's Episcopal Church. The preaching was done by the pastor of Windward United Church of Christ. Services were held alternately in the two churches with the congregations joined.

⁷Eugene Carson Blake, "Report to the Windward Coalition of Churches", April 24, 1975, p. 6.

⁸Interview with Warren G. Studer, Pastor of Christ Church Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians, School of Theology at Claremont, March 8, 1975.

A further goal was to communicate a stronger understanding of gospel, faith and church through preaching, teaching and media. The most significant demonstration of this dedication is to be found in the theologian-in-residence program. Among those who have contributed to this program are Dr. Eugene S. Werhli, Professor of New Testament, Eilen Theological Seminary; Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, noted ecumenist and former Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church USA; Dr. Harvey Seifert, Professor of Christian Ethics, School of Theology at Claremont; Lois Seifert, respected authority in Christian educational development and intergenerational studies.

The broad perspective and value of the theologian in residence can be seen in Dr. Werhli's report:

1. Work with clergy--18 study sessions, 18 business sessions, 6 primo sessions.⁹
2. Adult education with laity--"Parables", 4 sessions; "Revelation", 4 sessions; "Acts", 5 sessions; "Passion Narratives", 12 sessions; "Foci for Life", 4 sessions.¹⁰

In his year in Hawaii Dr. Werhli was involved on an almost daily basis in teaching, consulting, preaching, planning and lecturing to organizations all over Hawaii. His is only one example of the far-reaching influence of the theologian-in-residence program. In his report to the Coalition Dr. Blake wrote:

⁹Informal group discussions in social settings.
¹⁰Werhli.

You were very wise to develop as a major coalition program that of the theologian-in-residence...to stimulate and possible inform your own theological discussion and dialogue.¹¹

The value of this program can hardly be over-estimated in the light of the quest for Christian unity. It has worked extremely well in spreading a sense of oneness among the denominations in the Coalition.

It was hoped that the Coalition would result in more creative outreach into public life. For the most part, however, it has remained at a relatively low visibility outside the participating congregations. To be sure, there is occasional reporting of Coalition activities by the local press. There has not been a strong informational flow into the public sector. Much of this is due to the fact that there is no Coalition staff and responsibilities are not adequately defined. In spite of the lack of visibility referred to, there has been a most significant outreach into the community by the Social Concerns Task Force.

SOCO (pronounced sock-o), as it is referred to, is, along with the theologian-in-residence program, one of the most supported programs in the Coalition. SOCO's involvement in the community ranges from preschools for indigent and working parents to day care centers for senior citizens. It involves itself in every possible phase of the life of the community such as drug addiction, alcoholism, community

¹¹Blake, p. 2.

conflict, labor-law, police-public relations, blood banks, ecology, litter, pornography, regional planning, visits to correctional facilities, emergency aid through FISH, and many others. Relatively large numbers of laypersons are involved in this task force and it reaches deeply into the congregations in its appeal. By its very nature, however, SOCO is public-minded rather than publicity-minded. For this reason, its sense of mission is one of the strongest aspects of Christian unity in the Coalition.

In presenting this sketch of the Windward Coalition it is obvious that more emphasis has been placed on positive values than on the areas of disappointment. The Coalition has failed to develop a very high degree of cooperation in administration. There is no evidence of combined effort in housekeeping areas or care of grounds. There is no pooling of secretarial, bookkeeping or custodial tasks. There is no sharing of talents in the field of financial management and budgeting. Perhaps even this is significant of the task of union. COCU's plan for the Church of Christ Uniting found consensus in faith, worship and mission. It ran aground on structure and administration. It remains that the Windward Coalition--ten churches and twenty-eight hundred members--is a seed in the ecumenical grassroots. As a generating community in the plan for the union of Christ's church, it was not planted to prove there is fallow ground. It was planted in anticipation

of a future harvest. Apropos, here, are the words of Norman Perrin:

As the Palestinian peasant, after sowing, trusts to God and waits for the harvest, so the man who recognizes the challenge of the activity of God in the ministry of Jesus must learn the lesson patient waiting, in sure confidence that what has been planted will be reaped, that what God has begun he will bring to a triumphant conclusion.¹²

Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian found their mutual faith and mission in the common ground of the Windward Coalition. From that point the task of unity was in combining their structures.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT

Christ Presbyterian Church

It does not seem expedient to describe the two polities involved in the union of Christ Church. The structure of the Presbyterian system and its various judiciaries is familiar ground to those concerned with church unity. It is of importance to inform the reader of the specific relationship of Christ Presbyterian to the national body of the Presbyterian Church, USA, as a congregation of the Presbytery of the Pacific, Synod of Southern California. This fact was to have certain financial considerations which will be discussed in the following

¹²Norman Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teachings of Jesus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967) , p. 159.

chapter. Following here will be a description of the church structure as adopted by the Session on April 22, 1968.

First, the Session would concentrate on the tasks prescribed for it by the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, USA. In addition to these duties, the Session was to be composed of nine members, three of whom were to be trustees. The Session would be responsible for personnel recruitment and placement. It would also be responsible for public relations. The session was a policy-making body.

The trustees were to augment their staff from the congregation to carry out their duties, including a Treasurer and/or Financial Secretary. Areas of responsibility of the trustees included the following: budget-planning and control, financial records, receipts and disbursements, oversee building fund, supervision of property use and furnishings, maintenance of buildings and grounds, benevolence, stewardship, every-member canvass and the handling of wills, trusts and bequests. The trustees were the business and administrative branch of the structure.

A third structure in the church was the coordinator's council composed of four members directly responsible to the pastor and the Session. One coordinator was responsible for each of the following areas of church life: worship, study, internal mission and external mission. The coordinators were appointed annually by the Session. Their

duty was to create and integrate programs for the life and mission of the church. As will be seen later, this facet of the structure was to become unnecessarily cumbersome. The coordinators were unable to implement programs until they had gained approval of the Session. Responsibility for program, limited by a lack of authority to put it into effect, was an area of potential conflict.

The fourth structure of government in the church was in the role of the pastor. He was the moderator of the Session (policy-making body) and the chief officer of the church (administrator). He was also the coordinator of the coordinators (the program-developing body). In short, his was the responsibility for guiding the total life of the church in worship, nurture, fellowship, mission and government. The demands on the pastor's time and talent were myriad.

Windward Christian Church

Windward Christian Church was a congregationally-governed body--an autonomous corporation joined by ties of faith and loyalty to the larger brotherhood of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). By comparison to Christ Presbyterian it was much more independent and, consequently, much simpler in its governing structure.

The description that follows is taken from the constitution and by-laws of Windward Christian Church as

adopted May 22, 1960 and amended by congregational action on May 16, 1969. Unlike the Presbyterians, the provisional design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) sets up no general bodies with power over the local church. Each congregation is a separate, self-governing congregation with an independent corporate identity. It is bound to the national brotherhood by common faith and loyalty.

Windward Christian Church had only one governing body--the General Board. The nucleus of the board was the congregationally-elected officers of the church. Those were as follows: chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer elected to one-year terms; elders, not to exceed nine, to three-year terms; deacons not to exceed twelve, to three-year terms; deaconesses, not to exceed twelve, to three-year terms; and three trustees elected for a three-year term. The offices of elder, deacon, deaconess and trustee were elected on the basis of one-third of each group each year.

Added to the elected officers of the church were these members of the General Board: the chairmen of the functional committees of the church and the presidents or representatives of the Christian Women's Fellowship, the Christian Men's Fellowship and the Christian Youth Fellowship. The duties and responsibilities of the General Board were to consider and recommend to the congregation several policies, to administer the program of the church and to be

charged with the worship and devotional life of the church, Christian education, evangelism and membership development, community service and outreach, stewardship and property.

The authority of the General Board was vested by the congregation and it remained responsible to the congregation. The chairman of the General Board was, by virtue of his office, the moderator of the congregation. The duties of the minister of the church were to perform such duties as usually pertain to that office. As the spiritual administrator of the church he was ex-officio a member of all boards and committees.

These observations are worth noting in the comparison of the organizational structures of the two congregations. First, the autonomy of the Disciple congregation localized the decision-making process to a greater degree than was possible in the Presbyterian structure. Secondly, the single board of Windward Christian, though potentially large, was responsible for both program and policy. This was a more efficient system than the Session/Coordinator/Trustee make-up of Christ Presbyterian. (This structure has been re-designed.) Finally, Disciple structure required that the moderator of the congregation be from the laity. Presbyterian order required the pastor to be the chief executive of the church. This last difference was the final obstruction to unity. In the end, the Disciples accepted the Presbyterian structure. It became a lesser priority

than the desire for union. Growing together in love and fellowship, living together in worship and mission, the churches were able to develop a plan of union.

Plan of Union

The Plan of Union for Christ Church, Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians of Kailua, Hawaii was approved by the Session of Christ Presbyterian Church and the Board of Windward Christian Church on September 11, 1973 and amended on December 18, 1973. The Statement of Intent to Unify which serves as a preamble to the Plan of Union testifies to the spirit which made the unification possible. It reads as follows:

Statement of Intent

We, the congregation of Christ Presbyterian Church, Kailua, Hawaii, and Windward Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Kailua, Hawaii, in order to witness to the unity which is in Christ, and being a company of the People of God celebrating the One Father, Son and Holy Spirit, moving toward his coming Kingdom, and seeking in true faithfulness to unite under the one Gospel for Christ's mission and service in the world; do pledge ourselves corporately and individually:

To a renewal from the Holy Spirit to join in struggle against all of the problems of men which impede or restrict the unity of the Spirit which is the will of God as revealed in his Son, Jesus Christ;

To minister to the needs of all;

To provide for the common preservation and use of the many gifts, traditions and resources of our Christian heritage;

And to unite in all ways in our worship of God and in the mission of His Church;

Do hereby covenant together in this plan of union for the Church of Christ Uniting so that men may see our good works and give glory to the One God, Father and Creator of us all.

The governing structure which was developed in the Plan of Union was viewed as an interim proposal to give the new church a basis on which to accomplish its unification. It incorporated some compromise on the part of each congregation. The faith expressed by those involved has proved to be well-founded. A summary of the structure follows:

The governing body of the United Church was renamed the Church Council. The removal of the designation of "Session" and "General Board" provided a new point of reference. The Council consisted of nine members elected as serving elders of the congregation, three each year, for three-year terms. Three of the council members were to serve as trustees on a one-year rotation. One trustee was to serve as treasurer. The pastor was to serve as moderator of the Church Council but the Council elected its own clerk and administrative officers. A provision was included to make the pastor and the clerk of the Council ex-officio members of all councils and regulatory bodies of the church. The Council became responsible for all the policies, programs and administrative duties of the church.

The coordinator's group that had existed in the Presbyterian structure was redesigned as the program ministries council. New areas of responsibility were

identified as worship, education, witness (outreach/mission) and the gathered church (fellowship). The program ministries council was empowered to plan, develop and implement all programs of the church in keeping with existing policies. This council was also moderated by the pastor.

The office of deacon became a concept for the whole church. It was felt that all Christians are called to ministry in Jesus Christ and are deacons in the service of the church.

In January of 1974 full approval for the union of the two churches was granted by the Presbytery of the Pacific. A service of celebration was set for February 10th. The church had been several years abuilding. It was a time for celebration.

CHAPTER 4

THE BUILDING OF UNITY ¹

IN THE HANDS OF THE ARCHITECT

On January 15, 1974 letters went out from the chairman of the General Board of Windward Christian Church and the clerk of the Session of Christ Presbyterian Church to all the former pastors of the two churches. The opening paragraph of that letter read:

It is with deep joy that we officially announce the date of the culmination of Union of Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church. On Sunday, February 10, 1974, the newly formed Christ Church will invite members and friends to share a day of fellowship, dedication and celebration.

It is our intent, now, to review the events leading up to this announcement since they point up the thesis of this report--that in spite of the present tension in the movement toward union, there is a spirit present in the church which makes Christian unity possible. It is God's plan for the fulness of time. If God is the master architect for this plan, our faith must be in its fulfilment.

¹The material reported in Chapter 4 has been extracted from personal correspondence, notes, minutes of meetings, cassette tapes, the writer's own personal journal and from the memories of a year of living in the process of the merger. While no direct quotations have been made from them, two works on management and organization proved to be of great benefit in the development of the Plan for Unity: Bertram M. Gross, *Organizations and their Managing* (New York: Free Press, 1968), and William G. Scott, *Organizational Theory, a Behavioral Analysis for Management* (Homewood, IL: Irwin, 1967).

One should not shrink from the branch of "irrational optimism" when his faith is called beyond what can be seen in the present time. A person can find the signs which support his faith. Having found them he must hold firm, "For we share in Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end" (Heb. 3:14). Christ Church, Kailua may be a grain of a mustard seed but it is there, witnessing to its faith.

We have already seen the course of existence which brought Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church so near to each other in the beginning. It is a course of events which some may call mere coincidence. Others may look beyond coincidence to a greater plan for their unity. They existed, along with four other denominations, within a few hundred feet of each other along what is called "church row" in Kailua. Each church was established for almost identical reasons--for persons, particularly service personnel and tourists, who were seeking denominational identity. In 1969, both churches became charter members of the Windward Coalition of Churches, working toward sharing in worship, study and mission. Their ties grew closer and stronger.

A covenant between Windward Christian Church and the Coalition made it possible in 1971-72 for the pastor of Windward Christian Church to take a year's study leave. The leadership of the church was shared by other ministers in

the Coalition who provided pulpit supply and pastoral care. Significantly, one minister agreed to assume the administrative direction for the full year. That minister was the pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church. When the Disciples Seminary Foundation at The School of Theology in Claremont, California, in cooperation with the Disciples of Christ in Hawaii, began to send seminarians to Windward Christian Church to intern as pastoral trainees, the pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church served as their field supervisor. New bonds of fellowship and a sense of sharing in a common enterprise began to grow. In the summer of 1972, the Presbyterian pastor, Warren G. Studer, came to The School of Theology on study leave. In conversations between Studer and Dr. Donald Reisinger, Executive Director of the Disciples Seminary Foundation, the first seeds of unification were sown.

By this time, the churches had already had their first joint endeavors. On Sunday, February 20, 1974 they combined several adult study groups. Two of them, "Learning to Pray" and "The Self Development of Peoples" met at Christ Presbyterian Church, the third "Consultation on Church Union (COCU)" was held at Windward Christian Church. Following is an excerpt from the Christ Presbyterian Session agenda for March 22, 1972:

The COCU Study Class meeting at Windward Christian Church enthusiastically suggests the following plans for Easter morning--that our two congregations join together in worship at CPC at 9:00 A.M., but that it be continued at Windward Christian...

On that Easter Day after services at Christ Presbyterian the two congregations went in procession to Windward Christian to celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. An Easter breakfast and egg hunt completed a joyous day of worship and fellowship. This event became the basis of much enthusiastic discussion among the members of the congregations about the true meaning of "unity". The initial plans had been drawn by the Master Architect.

STARTING CONSTRUCTION

On September 10, 1972 this writer arrived in Hawaii to serve as intern pastor at the Windward Christian Church. It was obvious from the beginning that a special relationship existed between the Disciples and the Presbyterians. There was a feeling of family closeness that exceeded the common goals and experiences shared in the Coalition. As this spirit grew it became more and more evident that Windward Christian Church was increasingly desirous of a commitment to a more visible unity. By virtue of a strengthened financial condition due to the sale of their parsonage and the sharing of the church facilities with a Baptist congregation, Windward Christian Church decided on a dual course of action.

At a congregational meeting on November 5, 1972, the church voted to empower the Board to call an interim minister to lead them in negotiations with Christ Presbyterian should that church be receptive to such conversations. A second course would be to use the resources of the parsonage sale to support a two-year program of development at Windward. Should both courses fail, Windward Christian would then consider closing its doors. A few days later two representatives of Windward Christian Church were permitted to attend the Session of Christ Presbyterian Church. They presented a formal proposal that exploration of possible unification be undertaken with the ultimate goal being the merging of the two congregations. This proposal was met with enthusiastic, unanimous approval.

Four steps toward joint experiences were undertaken immediately:

1. An eight-week series of bible studies on the teachings of Jesus was scheduled under Dr. Eugene Wehrli, theologian-in-residence to the Coalition.
2. Three lay representatives of Windward Christian and the pastor were appointed to join the Coordination Committee to explore combined worship and educational involvements.
3. Members of Windward Christian were urged to join with Presbyterian Small Groups in home worship and fellowship.

4. The two pastors began to meet frequently to plan combined activities and special services to stimulate lay interest and action.

On the Sunday following the Session meeting of November 15, both pastors included a discussion session as a part of the sermon time. Laypersons from the two congregations shared their feelings and reactions. The discussions were meaningful and gratifying. Participation was widespread and generally affirmative. In spite of this early enthusiasm, it was decided that the first exposures were to be kept low key. Care was taken that no threat be posed in terms of denominational traditions and identity. In the end, however, it was lay pressure that increased the tempo of combined experience.

Windward representatives first met with the Presbyterian coordinators on December 1, 1972. A major portion of that evening was devoted to means of blending programs while retaining those particular features each church considered essential. No specific program development was considered at this meeting. The next sharing was to be in worship at a candlelight Christmas Eve communion.

At the January meeting, however, a sense of urgency surfaced and a joint congregational meeting was set for January 28th. The theme of that meeting was to be *merger*. The following recommendations were also voted:

1. To appoint a committee of three members from each congregation to discuss sacramental differences, organizational structures, financial arrangements and other aspects of merger.

2. To include a brief *minute for merger* in each worship service for comparisons of the two traditions.

3. That worship services at both churches be changed to 9:30 a.m. commencing February 4 so that church-at-study programs could be combined.

It is worthy of note at this point that all of these decisions came about through concerned lay participation and commitment. All lasting and meaningful change must come from the active interest of those persons it affects the most, in this case, the congregations.

THE CONGREGATIONS AT WORK

Windward Christian was still faced with the problem of finding pastoral leadership during the period of the negotiations. The pastor intern was due to return to the mainland in February for the spring semester at The School of Theology. Events were moving in such a way it was felt that the best plan of action would be for the intern to remain. Arrangements were made with the seminary for a semester of "leave" from classes. Windward Christian Church "called" the intern as its minister. For the first time in almost two years Windward Church had its own paid leader-

ship. It was a point of solidarity and security throughout the process.

In the first few months of 1973 steady progress was made in the joining of the congregations. Pulpit exchanges were made exposing the congregation to the two pastors. Combined church study programs were developed teaching the heritage and traditions of the congregations. Monthly joint worships were planned that alternated between the two sanctuaries. Social events were planned for informal opportunities of getting to know each other. In March, an ice cream social was planned to combine the congregations in family "small groups". This was a "service to each other" feature of the Presbyterian Church. The congregation was divided into five groups of 15 to 20 families each. They were designed for frequent social get-togethers and internal care. For example, should there be illness or crisis in a family, the other members of the small group would take over housekeeping chores, child care, meal preparation and errand running. In the united church the small groups were re-named "Delta Groups"--from the word diakonia--service. Hawaii lends itself to beach outings, picnics and the like and many such experiences were shared. The activities of the spring culminated in the second Easter experience. This time the first portion was held at Windward Christian followed by a procession to the Presbyterian sanctuary. The depth of the spiritual growth that accompanied all these

activities was beyond all measure. In order to illustrate the moving of that Holy Spirit a letter is reprinted here in its entirety.

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
P. O. Box 788
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

May 3, 1973

Dear Christian Friends,

I have been doing a lot of praying, silent meditation, on the evolution of this Committee and its members. I would that I could express my feelings as I have watched the unification of these two churches grow from a seed of friendship planted during Easter services one year ago.- I watched that seed sprout in the form of an Adult Study group last summer that ended with heavy hearts and muddied waters and with the realization of our weakness for church, building, and service identity. And then this past November I saw how the Holy Spirit had cleared those waters and that sprout burst forth into full bloom when delegates from Windward Christian simply walked into our Session meeting and said, "We would like to work with you to combine our time and talents for the ultimate goal of merger of our two congregations and the unification of all Christians." The Session, without a question, without hesitation, voted unanimously for this ultimate goal.

Since that meeting we have systematically moved ever closer to the total unification of our congregations. Hidden fears and historical barriers fell with hardly a thought, as I have watched this magnificent event unfold. I wondered how we would eventually be directed. Then last Sunday, after that magnificent Easter service, a favorite Bible passage blinked into my mind. It's found in Acts, Chapter 2, verse 17: "...and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams..." And I see this event as a vision for our congregations. Can you see the unification of Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian? Now look! can you see the unification of the churches on church row? Can you visualize the combination of the time and talents of *that* congregation? This is truly a vision, not a dream.

We on this committee are tasked with developing a model church that combines our two congregations into

one. Make it a good model - it's the foundation for what is to come. I think it may be a little more than a coincidence that that passage from Acts was none other than Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost. Peter also had a model to build and we stand today as an example of the foundation he laid.

I propose that we approach our problem in the following manner:

1. Develop a plan for combined worship
 - a. Methods of baptism for both congregations
 - b. Means for daily, weekly, or monthly communion
2. Determine a method of handling the assets and liabilities of both churches
3. Provide a method of communication to keep the congregations informed of developments
4. Produce a structure for governing the combined congregations

We must remember the sensitive nature of combining historical teachings and doctrine. If we look to *preserve* those elements that tend to identify, rather than work to *change* them, our unification will be strengthened not weakened. We must mold ourselves into one body with these elements to share rather than to fear. In this matter we can be Christians first, Disciples and Presbyterians second.

To accomplish the above proposal, I think we should divide up into teams; each team picking one subject. To assist us I feel we should write a letter to both ministers and to the ordained ministry in each congregation explaining our proposal, asking for their assistance in both the technical and theological areas of the unification. We have several members of both congregations who have participated in previous unification of congregations and we should obtain their assistance, get them to list both the good and the bad experiences.

We also should elect a Chairman and a Clerk.

I was asked by the joint meeting of our official boards to convene the first meeting of this committee. I would like to propose 7:30 p.m. on Monday, May 7, 1973 for our first meeting. It will be at Christ Presbyterian Church. This does not make me the Chairman. If any of you who have been called to this task do not feel qualified, then join the rest of us. Through Christ all things are possible.

Sincerely in Christ,
Tom Paulsen

The committee called in the preceding letter met on May 7, 1973. The name "Committee for Unity" was unanimously adopted. Mr. Paulsen was named its chairman by acclamation. One of the committee's first recommendations was that the congregations worship jointly commencing on June 17, 1973. They have been together since that day.

The duties of the committee were diverse and often difficult. A detailed report of their activities has been attached as addenda. Suffice it to say here they saw their responsibility to 1) develop a model or detailed plan for unification, 2) initiate experimental unification actions and programs, and 3) present recommendations to both boards for approval and presentation to the congregations. To accomplish this task the committee developed four subcommittee assignments to: 1) develop a plan for combined worship, 2) devise methods for handling assets and liabilities of both churches, 3) provide communication methods to keep the congregations informed of developments and 4) produce a structure for governing the combined congregations.

Certain target dates were set for the committee to accomplish its task. The four subcommittees were to have their plans ready for congregational approval in September. In November, those plans, with their recommended amendments would be reviewed with the judicatories of both churches and a statement of intent to unite docketed. Authorization

and final approval of the judicatories would be formally sought in January. Final unification would be celebrated in a worship service on a convenient date in February 1974. That date was February 10.

The report of the unification of Christ Church which has preceded would seem to indicate a smooth untroubled transition. Such was not the case. The chronology of progress was designed to show the result of many hours of devoted and painstaking labors. All of those hours were not good hours. Many arguments had to be resolved and concessions made by both congregations. Differences were worked through on Baptism, Communion, membership and the governing structure. Subcommittee meetings were called with such frequency that hope for progress sometimes seemed futile. Through it all people worked, argued, then worked some more. There was a conscious effort to keep at the forefront the theme of unity that it is God's purpose to unite all things and that it is the church's responsibility to demonstrate that unity in its visible form. There was a constant effort to concentrate on the need to give way on traditional ways of doing things--to strive to attain that common bond in Christ.

It is interesting to note that the tensions were more evident at the committee level than in the congregation. In June written and verbal responses to the unification were asked for. In reviewing the feedback the committee

found this to be the consensus. The negative responses were not reactions to the unification itself but to the mechanics of it. There was an absence of any really serious concerns or problems. The committee's review reached this conclusion: There was nothing that required any real change of direction.

DEDICATING THE BUILDING

February 10, 1974

We are assembled here today to celebrate the union of Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches of Kailua, Hawaii. With hearts filled with gratitude for the mercies of God, and in the holy intentions of love and obedience we offer this union to God in the confident hope that it is acceptable to Him and will be a blessing to His people and a witness to the world. In the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us move on to the perfection of our unity in Him and in His Church.

With these words, the Rev. Warren G. Studer opened the inspiring celebration of union of Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church in Kailua, Hawaii, on Sunday, February 10, 1974. A high point in the celebration came when four people stood together at the altar. The first was Lt. Commander Tom Paulsen, the Presbyterian elder who had served as chairman of the joint committee for unity between the two congregations.

As an elder of Christ Presbyterian Church I make this following declaration of union:

"As we of this congregation bind ourselves into union with the congregation of the Disciples of Christ, Windward Christian Church, this tenth day of February in the year of our Lord 1974"

Next, the Rev. James Jones of Los Angeles, representing the Presbytery of the Pacific:

The congregation of the Presbytery voted unanimously that this should come to pass; you have the blessing of the Presbytery of the Pacific.

Then Mrs. Pat Mumford, co-chairman from Windward Christian Church spoke:

For two and a half years I have been first chairman and then with Paul Snipes co-chairman of Windward Church. It means more to me than words can possibly express to reaffirm, on behalf of the congregation of Windward Christian Church, our intent to merge with the congregation of Christ Presbyterian Church and form Christ Church, Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians in Kailua, and to bring to that union this Bible, which has been in the history of Windward Christian Church in the possession of each of the lay chairmen since Windward's inception in 1960.

Acknowledging that while approval by the Christian Church was not needed to form this union congregation, Dr. Paul Snipes, the other co-chairman from Windward Christian Church, assured those present that the church's headquarters had been kept fully informed. He read a letter from Dr. Kenneth L. Teagarden dated late in January:

I have read the statement of intent and plan for unity, as well as the statement of mission. I congratulate the two congregations on these two documents. Perhaps this experience can be a foretaste of a larger, future reconciliation in the Church. ...It will be our hope that this friendship and unity will be a blessing to both congregations and a symbol of the oneness and the wholeness of the Church of Jesus Christ. Sincerely, Kenneth L. Teagarden, General Minister and President, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Over two years have passed and the newness of the merger is wearing off. Programs are progressing well with members of

both former churches in leadership roles. The pastor, Warren Studer, has received official recognition from the Christian Church so that he is now fully credited as both a Presbyterian and a Disciple minister. He comments on the merger process.

If there's any one factor that could be cited as being the most significant in making this union possible, it would have to be the personal factor. Before we ever launched into the hard discussions and decisions which faced us in a merger like this, we allowed plenty of time to get acquainted. We were together in study, worship, prayer, fellowship, and service. At a very deep level we discovered each other as fellow Christians, and this provided the quality of openness and frankness with which we could make the hard decisions that eventually had to be made. Being involved in the developing merger process and now in this union Church is a great adventure. The challenge ahead of Christ Church is to be a church where the rich heritage of both Disciples and Presbyterians will be maintained as it moves into the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Reflecting on the unity of Christ Church, a great deal of the success of the merger may seem attributable to a lack of major personal opposition. In a sense, this is true. Most of the difficulties in the negotiations were adjustments to tradition and polity. They were being worked out by persons who were deeply dedicated to achieving the merger.

It cannot be assumed, however, that no personal opposition existed. In the beginning there were members in both congregations who held deep reservations concerning the merger. A few of these were openly opposed to organic union.

Countering this opposition was a strongly-convinced clergy and some devoted laypersons. Consistent positive preaching from the pulpit and untiring efforts in committees in small groups and in inter-personal relationships marked the leadership roles of the two pastors. The leadership of key laypersons showed deep spiritual commitment, candor and acceptance. Through the mutual efforts of all those involved, continually and prayerfully opening to the will of God, even those persons most opposed became convinced in the end. Three of those opposed to union at the beginning actually became members of the committee for unity and worked in the development of the Plan of Union.

Warren Studer said, "In the holy intentions of love and obedience we offer this union to God in the confident hope that it will be acceptable to Him and will be a blessing to His people and a witness to the world." The dynamics of this union can be a challenge to others whose faith compels them to make a similar offering to the perfection of unity in Christ.

CHAPTER 5

THE CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE

In this last chapter of my report on the union of the churches in Hawaii, I will state some convictions which have arisen out of the experience. For this purpose, I have chosen to divide these reflections into three areas of discussion: First: What are the viable opportunities for union? Second: What is our responsibility within the framework of these opportunities? And, last: What are some of the obstacles in our path? When the theory of probability runs adverse to our hopes we tend to be discouraged. The fact remains, however, that regardless of the probabilities there always exists the possibility. Dr. Harold Fey, a respected Disciple of Christ ecumenist, maintains that the "union of the Church is inevitable--but in God's time."¹

OPPORTUNITY

A question that has remained in my mind for the whole period of time from September 1972 is this one--Is the example of Christ Church's success due mainly to its Hawaiian setting? The Island culture is one of broad ethnic mixture. Within the structure of that mixture the whites do not dominate the society as they do on the main-

¹Dr. Harold E. Fey, Personal Interview, Claremont, March 4, 1976.

land. In many ways whites are regarded as intruders and are mistrusted. In the overall picture of the island, they are in fact a subculture. "Theirs has been a role of decreasing influence,"² says Abraham H. Dohi, National Missions Representative of the Presbyterian Synod of Southern California-Hawaii. He sees their status in the social structure as being centralized in two areas: in banking and in the churches. Applying this sub-dominant position to whites, does he then seek the security of his own kind, thereby making his church, in effect, an ethnic church? If so, is there any greater significance to the union of Christ Church than there would be should two Black or two Mexican or two Indian congregations band together on the mainland? Was, then, this opportunity unique to Hawaii? Much of the answer is in the self-image of the participants and what they see as the role of the church in the society. In order to reach at least a partial answer to these questions, my wife and I went to Hawaii in July 1975 for a series of interviews.

Over a period of about ten days, discussions were held in various settings. We had special luncheons, dinners, coffee hours, private conversations--anything that could be done to immerse ourselves in the subject at hand. We interviewed more than seventy-five members of Christ

²Abraham H. Dohi, "The Peoples of Hawaii and the Means of Reaching Them", Committee Report, Aug. 22, 1968, p.9.

Church, three Coalition ministers and numerous persons in the Kailua community. In the course of these interviews we asked several general questions:

1. How do you feel about the merger now that Christ Church is 18 months old?
2. Have you experienced any problems which you didn't anticipate?
3. Are you comfortable with the changes in worship brought about by the union?
4. Do you see what you have done as being more spiritual than pragmatic?
5. Do you think this experience is unique to your situation or could it happen anywhere?

Because of our former close association with these people, our interviews were conducted in low-key conversational settings. The number of persons involved was usually two or three couples. No questionnaires were prepared for written responses. Only on rare occasions were any notes taken. Usually we would gather in a small group in someone's living room. I would inform the group of my dissertational plans and outline the questions to be discussed. After the sessions, my wife, my daughter who traveled with us, and I would reflect on the group's response. It did not take long for a consensus to be discerned in the attitudes of the people. Our reflections

were then recorded in a personal journal which became so repetitious that some discussions went unrecorded. This is what we found:

There was a signal absence of regret concerning the act of merger. Everyone seemed to be positive and secure in the union. "We'll never go back now,"³ said Sue Kain, wife of the first pastor of Windward Christian and now director of Hawaii Council of Churches. "It's been wonderful and that's all there is to it,"⁴ were the words of Bob Cooper, former clerk of the Session, Christ Presbyterian Church.

In July of 1975 no new problems had surfaced in the experience of the congregation. The original governing structure had been seen as temporary from the beginning. The feelings expressed indicated that the congregation was now sufficiently welded together and ready to face the task of producing a more permanent document. As it happened, this was accomplished before the end of the year, but they simply amended the original document to combine their two boards into one.

During the merger negotiations some of the most ticklish problems had been those concerning sacraments notably Communion and Baptism. What had been discovered

³F. D. Bonvillain, Hawaii Journal, 1975, p. 3.

⁴ibid., p. 10.

in the course of time was that there was an openness to the acceptance of the various forms--not only to accept but to participate. Many of the Presbyterians had come to find meaning in weekly communion. Some were hoping for an "immersion". Christ Church offers communion every Sunday for those who desire it. The method of baptism is optional with the new member. There was an evident solidarity on maintaining the traditions for the future. There were no denominational hangups--rather an open candor and willingness to venture into new worship forms.

On the question of the spirituality of the union we found a minority who felt that practical reasons had more to do with merger than deep spiritual witness. Mrs. Barbara Culler said she viewed the merger as a positive experience and "I am happy with it, but I don't feel deeply spiritual about it."⁵ She exemplifies the minority. Most people questioned retained the spirit of witness that was so pronounced in those first experiences of growing together.

Was this experience viewed as being unique to Hawaii? This question seemed to surprise most of those questioned. The cultural aspects of the merger were not a part of their thought processes. Christ Church sees its primary mission in service to the local community. Further, the church has several oriental families, one or two Hawaiians and numerous "kamaaine" Caucasians among its members.

⁵ibid., p. 3.

(A "kamaaine" is a person native to or a long-time resident of the islands.) This is opposed to the term "haole" which refers to a newcomer. The answer to the question was stated identically by Tom Paulsen, a Presbyterian and Pat Mumford, former co-chairman of the Board of Windward Christian Church. In separate interviews they both said "If you open yourself to the Holy Spirit, it can happen anywhere."⁶

If Christ Church is an example of what is possible, and I submit that it is, then our opportunity for Christian unity rests with our ability to respond to God's will. To seek out our oneness, and to commit ourselves to it, is the way to being one with one another in Christ and through Him one with the Father.

RESPONSIBILITY

The covenant of the Consultation on Church Union states in part that it is a movement and a process seeking the visible unity of the Body of Christ. This should be the central theme of the whole church, that is, the movement of all creation toward ultimate unity in Christ. The responsibility of the church in the attainment of that unity cannot be set aside. The source and motive for unity is not found in the needs of men but in the mind and will of God. Where the church responds to the will of God, there is where the needs of men are fulfilled. This means that

⁶ibid., pp. 8, 9.

we may need to break away from some of the traditions that build fences around us in striving to attain our common bond in Christ. There is one overall encompassing responsibility of our faith in Christ--to permeate the world with his healing love. We must embody the Gospel with our own indivisible community. Christ is one in God. The mission of the Church is to proclaim Christ in the world until all shall be one. It is the way of Truth.

OBSTACLES

Whenever a discussion arises on the subject of obstacles to Christian unity the first thing mentioned is structure. In the opening paragraphs of this paper it was stated that an organic reunion of the denominations was neither probable nor desirable in our current mood. Too much is left to be accomplished below the top. In my interview with Dr. Harold Fey, March 4, 1976, I asked him about some of the problems surrounding organic union. He spoke of a number of them such as "the wide disparity in organizational structures leading to bureaucratic barriers, irresponsible accounting procedures in many polities, fragmented authority, lack of strong leadership in upper levels of the denominations, widespread spiritual and intellectual apathy--in short, many problems within the denominations which preclude a proper commitment to ecumenism." We speak

⁷Fey.

of consensus in faith and doctrine but this refers mainly to COCU denominations. Large groups, particularly the conservatives and evangelicals stand outside in self-supporting cooperatives. These are, in a sense obstacles to structural union that are organizational in scope--reflecting a fear of centralization and overt power. A far greater obstacle to union may reside in our high degree of accepted pluralism.

It seems to me that some false idea exists that diversity and union are mutually exclusive circumstances. Yet we seem to have sufficient examples at hand that such is not the case. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is an example of a denomination founded on a concept of unity in diversity. In a recent address to that body's General Assembly, Albert C. Outler remarked:

In the field of ecumenism, your leadership record is out of proportion to your other statistics in American Church history. It may be the best of any denomination in the lot.⁸

Somehow, union equates with conformity and loss of identity, yet, the history of the Disciples seems to indicate a high degree of unity and oneness in Christ out of a congregationally individualistic structure. The experience has created identity for the disciple member. He would not see it as pluralism.

⁸ Albert C. Outler, "Ecumenism for Third Generation Ecumenists," *Mid-Stream* XIV:4 (October 1975), 525.

Another obstacle to union is the current instant-success syndrome. What cannot be done quickly should not be done at all. Impatience is a distinct trait of our culture yet meaningful change is a slow process in time. What God's time is, we cannot know. We must wait upon the Lord in patient faith continuing to work at our appointed rounds.

CONCLUSIONS

Cooperation is never an easy achievement. When viable union occurs it occurs in and through the context of whatever barriers are in its way. The main lesson to be learned from the experience is what caused the success--not what were the impediments. Several factors made the union of the congregations in Hawaii possible. These might serve as methods for other churches contemplating union.

A primary requirement is to go slowly. Allow for time to become well-acquainted. Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian had been growing together for several years before the word "merger" was spoken. They had shared joint experiences socially and religiously, thus getting to know each other and to trust each other. In time all threats as to individual identity became insignificant.

Another step is to seek joint external mission. Find things to do together that reach out beyond the congregation involved. Unified efforts greatly enhance effective-

ness in mission and you will find joy and fulfilment in cooperative efforts to help others. Fairly soon there will be an open exchange of internal mission as well.

Have fun together. Plan family-oriented activities such as picnics, ice cream socials, pot-lucks. Parents need to trust each other but so do young people. In fact, a change of church setting is more often more difficult for the young. Get to be friends.

Worship together with a degree of selectivity at first. A good example would be Good Friday and Thanksgiving Day services which are seen as more ecumenical in appeal. This prepares the people for experiences in more denominationally traditional liturgies and sacraments.

Study together. A joint vacation Bible school effort and special study series which teach the origins and beliefs of each denomination will encourage understanding and reduce tensions about differences. A serious effort should be made to preserve meaningful traditions and heritages. They can become a point of added worth and pride. Point to the strength in diversity when tradition is preserved rather than compromised.

Seek out strongly-committed laity when deeper negotiations begin. Creative programs for accelerated joint activities often require a lot of working through. They must be approached with a positive attitude and a strong faith.

Keep Christ at the front of all you do. A continuing emphasis on spiritual values will deepen the desire to seek the unity which God wills.

Such were the elements and dynamics of experience which led to Christ Church. Present at Kailua also were two ministers convinced of the rightness of their response to their ministry in Jesus Christ. There was a consistent dedication to the task which brought a uniquely-shared joy as the people came together in union.

Out of this experience, I have gained a deep and abiding faith in God's plan for the fulness of time. I feel no need to know that time, for I have learned that my work is in the present. For me, Christian unity is a Divine Imperative. If it is to be accomplished in small ways, through two or three congregations, here and there I cannot question. Each person has to translate his own convictions into his own response.

At this point in time the ecumenical tide may appear to be at its ebb. I cannot know when it will flow again. I must work as though it were now. So must everyone who believes that Christian unity is the responsibility of every Christian.

There is no time for pessimism. Dedicated persons continue to work in many ways. Our seminaries continue to gather candidates for ministry from all creeds and cove-

nants. Perhaps it shall be left to these, in time, to serve the One Church. If the church opens itself fully to the Holy Spirit of God it can happen anytime.

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A P P E N D I X

WINDWARD CHRISTIAN CHURCH
1230 Kailua Road, P.O. Box 242
Kailua, Hawaii 96734
Phone 262-7333

F. D. Bonvillain
School of Theology
1325 College Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711

January 15, 1974

Dear Bon,

It is with deep joy that we officially announce the date of the Celebration of Union of Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church.

On Sunday, February 10, 1974, the newly formed Christ Church will invite members and friends to share an evening of fellowship, dedication and celebration.

We would like nothing more than to be able to tell you that transportation and housing money is available so that we could plan to have you with us. Unfortunately, this isn't the case, but that doesn't mean that we don't want you! If you could possibly be here for this special event we will be glad to arrange for you to stay in one of our homes. Please let us know if this might be a possibility.

If you are not able to be with us in person, we would greatly appreciate a few words from you either in letter form or on tape. Part of the celebration will be comments from all former pastors of both churches.

We know you wish us well in this new adventure. Please give prayerful thought to how you will be able to participate, and advise us of your plans as soon as possible.

Aloha,

Pat

A Congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

WINDWARD CHRISTIAN CHURCH
P. O. Box 242
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

December 19, 1973

TO: MEMBERS OF WINDWARD CHRISTIAN CHURCH
FROM: YOUR CO-CHAIRMEN, PAT MUMFORD AND PAUL SNIPES

A joint Easter worship service in March, 1972 became the basis of much enthusiastic discussion among members of Windward Christian Church and Christ Presbyterian Church about the true meaning of "unity".

In September, 1972 our congregation began to think seriously of committing ourselves to visible unity, and on November 5 voted to empower the Board to call an interim minister who could lead us in merger negotiations with Christ Presbyterian.

At a meeting of Christ Presbyterian's governing body (The Session) on November 15, 1972 two representatives of our church formally presented a proposal that exploration of possible unification be undertaken with the ultimate goal of the merger of the two churches. This proposal met with enthusiastic, unanimous approval.

On December 31, 1972 another Windward Christian Church congregational meeting reaffirmed our desire for unity, and urged all due speed in the negotiations. "Bon" Bonvillain was asked to stay through August, 1973 in order to lead us in our talks.

Zan Brighter, Dick Dearing, and Don Mumford (with Paul Snipes as alternate) accepted the responsibility of membership on the Committee For Unity, and on May 7, 1973 began intensive study with four Christ Presbyterian lay people plus the two ministers.

After much prayer and deliberation, proposal and feedback, writing and changing plus plain hard work, the final document has been presented by the Committee and approved unanimously by both governing bodies. (See enclosures.) There have been joys and disappointments as the Plan has progressed. Some of the things which Disciples have felt were important have been deleted or changed (but that has happened to the Presbyterians, too!) Weekly communion, the option of immersion baptism and strong lay leadership have been retained. And, now it is time to decide if this is really what we want.

Please cast your vote for the future of Windward Christian Church. If you do *not* feel that this is what we should be doing -- SAY SO! What is being proposed is a "Giant step" and we must be sure that it is in the right direction.

Come to the congregational meeting of Windward Christian Church at 10:30 a.m. following worship on

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6

We will be meeting apart from the Christ Presbyterian congregation and the vote will be by secret ballot.

PLEASE BE THERE!!!

EVENTS LEADING TO THIS MERGER COMMITTEE

IN THE BEGINNING

FROM THE BULLETIN AT CPC ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1972

All adults are welcome and encouraged to participate in one of the Adult Study Courses provided jointly by Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches. Classes are as follows: "Learning to Pray" taught by John Witwer and Dodie Warren; "The Self Development of Peoples" taught by Wayne Protheroe; "Consultation of Church Union (COCU)" taught by Dave Steele and meets at Windward Christian; "Sermon Feedback" by Warren Studer.

FROM SESSION AGENDA SHEET FOR SESSION MEETING ON MARCH 22, 1972

The COCU Study Class meeting at Windward Christian Church on Sunday mornings enthusiastically suggests the following plans for Easter morning -- that our two congregations join together in worship at CPC at 9:00 a.m., but that it be concluded at Windward Christian. We will all process together to their church and share in the sacrament of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Then we will have the breakfast and egg hunt together on their spacious grounds. Our Worship, Church at Study, and Internal Mission Coordinators wholeheartedly concur in these plans as well as their counterparts in the Windward Christian Church.

FROM COORDINATOR MEETING MINUTES, NOVEMBER 10, 1972

Windward Christian Church has voted to try to unite with CPC. Warren requested that Program Coordinators come to the next Session meeting to discuss this possibility with one of the representatives from the Christian Church.

On Sunday, November 12, members of Windward Christian will extend an invitation to our congregation to join them in a continuation of the Bible Studies led by Dr. Wehrli. This study will be based on the teachings of Jesus.

FROM SESSION MEETING MINUTES, NOVEMBER 15, 1972

Pat Mumford and Rev. Bonvillain, representatives from Windward Christian Church, joined the Session meeting for a brief period to present a proposal from the congregation of Windward Christian that they join in discussion with Christ Presbyterian for exploration of unification of the two church bodies with the ultimate goal of merger.

The Session voted unanimously to act in the affirmative in working together for this goal. Elders Cooper and Hansen together with two representatives from Windward Christian were asked to present this goal to both congregations during the next Sunday service. Many suggestions

were made as to how we can best accomplish this goal. Encouragement is to be made at all levels of the church and it was proposed that the Coordinators of Christ Presbyterian meet with the lay leaders of Windward Christian to determine methods of combining church time and talent.

FROM COORDINATOR MEETING MINUTES, DECEMBER 1, 1972

The major portion of the meeting was devoted to discussion of how to blend CPC and WCC programs while retaining those particular features which each church considers essential. Tom Paulsen identified merger of time and talents as the ultimate goal and offered the idea of WCC filling the vacant Worship Coordinator position for a start. Warren Studer stated this position may have been filled so action on this proposal was deferred. F. D. Bonvillain and Paul Snipes explained WCC's position in issuing a call for a minister. Their primary reason is to preserve their identity during an interim period of indefinite duration and they do not intend to make a long term commitment to any minister who may be selected. Fern Sutton expressed her strong feeling that a second minister should be one qualified to work with youth and Warren assured that these things are being fully considered in the continuing discussion which is taking place. Further discussion involved the positive impact on both congregations of the merger dialogue and the need for a meaningful youth program including, if possible, a paid Youth Coordinator.

Windward Christian's presently active membership was estimated as 10 families (or family units). Formal activity at present is limited to an evening Prayer Group meeting during the week, attendance at Rev. Wehrli's Sunday night Bible Study, and the Sunday worship service. A joint class devoted to the origins of the Disciples of Christ and led by Paul Snipes was briefly and favorably discussed, but no details were developed.

FROM COORDINATOR MEETING MINUTES, JANUARY 5, 1973

Communication Area Review Relative to Both Churches: Warren suggested that one very decisive step was to invite Windward Christian member to sit in on Session meetings, allowing understanding of functioning of CPC. The feedback is positive from CPC congregation. Tom Paulsen confirmed unanimity of Session regarding person from WCC. Warren announced that Bob Cooper will attend meeting of the Presbytery, January 9, 1973 on the mainland and it is expected Don Reisinger, Executive Director, Disciples Seminary Foundation, will be present and they will get together.

Paul Snipes said it was indicated at the Congregational meeting last Sunday (December 31, 1972) that they are eager to move ahead relative to the merger and wish to speed along negotiations. It was suggested that Bon remain

for another semester if they felt it best. It was concluded that it is best not to change again at this juncture. Bon did receive permission to remain one more semester from Don Reisinger. WCC has tremendous assets but poor cash flow and special focus is being placed on this problem by elders and minister.

Bon reiterated Paul's statement regarding desire to speed up merger and further suggested that areas of Youth and Administration of both churches be shared by ministers. Expressed strong feeling that negotiations are beyond "exploratory" stage.

Paul expressed concern that we begin to explore ways to solve the differences regarding baptism, communion, new name for congregation. Also suggested that a five minute spot be devoted at both churches each Sunday relative to comparisons of the two churches. Warren suggested that a Committee be appointed to study problems and suggest solutions. Bon requested a recommendation be made and name people to a Merger Committee.

Following discussion, it was decided that the January 28 CPC Congregational meeting theme be "Merger" and throw it into open discussion. It was suggested that WCC be invited to attend the meeting.

Following recommendations were voted: (1) Appoint Committee made up of 3 members from each congregation to discuss baptism, communion, organizational structure, new name, financial considerations and any other aspects of merger. They will have the authority to request any special assistance they feel necessary. Their GOAL will be to prepare a potential model which the Committee will present to their respective governing bodies. (2) Each Sunday a five minute spot will be devoted to a written statement regarding various comparisons of the two churches -- to be titled MINUTE FOR MERGER. The target date for inclusion in the service will be January 21 with Paul Snipes and Tom Paulsen working out the format and content.

Hour of Worship recommendation: (1) Worship services for both congregations start at 9:30 a.m. beginning first Sunday in February. (2) Have alternating once a month joint worship services starting in February and beginning at WCC.

FROM COORDINATOR MEETING MINUTES, FEBRUARY 8, 1973

Tom observed a need for banners for the two churches as symbols for each congregation at joint services. Suggested Karen McWilliams' class might be able to make them.

FROM COORDINATOR MEETING MINUTES, MARCH 20, 1973

Easter Decisions Regarding Services, etc.: (1) Decided to again have the Easter processional; this time beginning at WCC and marching to CPC. (2) Decided to suspend

Church at Study on Easter. (3) Paul Snipes again requested that banners be made and hung on Easter showing the symbols of both churches. Efforts will be made in this regard.

(4) Child care will be as usual at CPC. (5) No egg hunt, however, have a brunch; It was suggested that it be co-chaired by Cynthia Tchou and possibly a person from WCC.

(6) Palm Sunday worship together at WCC. Motion was made, seconded, and approved and referred to CPC Session for action. (7) Motion was made, seconded and carried to have public reception of new members into CPC on Easter Sunday.

George Sutton expressed concern relative to the CPC Evaluation Committee as to whether WCC should be a part of this evaluation since the merger was not being discussed. He felt that the Mission Study requested by Charles Marks should be combined into the Evaluation Committee. Tom explained to all that the objective of the Evaluation Committee was to find direction of future and look over the past. Paul felt that it was an assumption that past performance should determine the future; the report could be obsolete before it could be used. George recommended that the "direction" should be a joint effort by CPC and WCC. Alan Bail felt we should combine right now. Motion was made that discussions should encompass both programs--evaluation and mission. It was moved, seconded and carried. It was explained that the above was the thinking of this group, and must be approved by the Session. Tom urged both churches get involved in whatever occurs and include as many different members as possible.

Internal Mission--referred to Small Group Kick-off Ice Cream Social on March 31 at WCC. Groups will be a surprise to all. Intention is to split groups via animal designations. Aim or goals of small groups is primarily fellowship. Requested and urged proper enthusiasm from Coordinators at the Ice Cream Social.

Minute for Brotherhood material is prepared however both men will be absent (Snipes and Paulsen) and would like substitutes during absence. Exact dates of absence will be submitted later. It was asked if Minute for Brotherhood should be done every Sunday. All felt it an excellent learning situation, but felt that at times it made the Sunday program too crowded.

(NOTE: All the Minute for Brotherhood messages are in a small brown notebook on the Secretary's desk, if you would like to refer to them. When there is time, it is planned for them to be put in a mimeographed booklet form so everyone can have a copy to read at their own leisure.)

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY
of Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches
Minutes of the May 22, 1973, Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. at Christ Presbyterian Church, with prayer by Jo Ann Cooper. All committee members and Warren Studer, pastor of Christ Presbyterian, were present at the meeting. The minutes of the May 7 meeting were read and approved as submitted by the Clerk. It was agreed that the minutes of each meeting would be posted on the bulletin board for the regular review of committee progress and actions by the congregation.

The subcommittees which were appointed at the May 7 meeting were asked to make their individual reports. Jo Ann Cooper and Zan Brighter submitted a written report of progress and specific recommendations, which is attached herewith. This report was unanimously adopted as submitted and the Committee For Unity endorsed the recommendations.

It was decided that three big banners should be prepared for display during the common worship services. One was to display the Presbyterian symbol on the cover of the Book of Common Worship. Another for the Disciples was to contain the chalice and the cross. The third was to symbolize the theme of unification. Funds need to be provided for this purpose so that the banners could be ready by June 17.

Tom Paulsen and Dick Dearing presented their report and recommendations. After a considerable discussion, it was decided that the following steps should be taken: (1) the treasurers and trustees of both churches should begin to coordinate their financial affairs and planning, (2) combined financial reporting should be initiated immediately although separate accounting systems and procedures would still be maintained for a time, and (3) the financial and legal aspects of the ultimate formal unification of assets and liabilities should be probed in depth. It is believed that a lot is involved in combining our resources and the necessary studies should commence particularly where such work involves outside parties such as Presbytery.

A plan was recommended for the equitable distribution of the offerings which will be received during the combined worship services. Members of both congregations would be encouraged to use individual envelopes for offerings, especially for the submittal of pledged offerings. The envelopes will be returned to their respective churches. Loose offerings would be distributed to both churches pro-rata based on the average of each church's monthly loose offerings

over the past six months.

John Witwer reported the work that he and Paul Snipes had completed. The following communications plan was adopted for Windward Christian: (1) timely presentations of committee progress and actions will be presented before their congregation during worship. (2) newsletter reports will be provided, and (3) individual contacts will be handled when necessary by committee members. The following communications plan is to be adopted for CPC: (1) personal congregational presentations and newsletter releases will also be provided, (2) Tom Paulsen will provide contact with the Session and coordinators, (3) communication with the small groups will be handled as appropriate by committee members in their respective groups. Paul Snipes and John Witwer, supported by other committee members, will handle the presentations before their respective congregations. In the event that special presentations of some importance are called for, these will be planned specifically and individually as they come up. It is recommended that the essence of the plan for eventual unification be presented to the congregations and that they be advised of their responsibility to get involved in the feed-back process. A special concern was raised in relation to the need to bring the unification plan before the inactive members.

It was moved and passed unanimously that both congregations should hold individual open meetings ideally prior to June 17. This would be a time to feed into the congregation a progress report and our plans of what we intend to do. We would also solicit concerns that might exist concerning the unification plan itself or basic aspects of it.

Don Mumford and Rosemary Allen submitted the following subcommittee report: They have been gathering materials from both denominations, from local and other sources. They are studying resource materials concerning recent unions and mergers. Their major task now is to develop the proposed structure for the unified church we envision.

John Witwer was asked by the Chairman, Tom Paulsen, to request the presence of Dr. Wehril at our next committee meeting. He will be asked to discuss the theology of unification. All of the clergy of both churches will also be invited to attend, to discuss this vital subject.

Don Mumford invited all of the Presbyterians to the Annual Meeting of the Disciples of Christ in Hawaii. The meeting will convene at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 10, at First Christian Church in Honolulu.

The next meeting of the Committee For Unity was set for Tuesday, June 5, at 7:30 p.m. at Christ Presbyterian Church, provided this date was convenient to Dr. Wehrli. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m. with prayer by Rev. Studer.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN WITWER
Clerk of Committee

REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE FOR UNITY BY ZAN BRIGHTER AND JO ANN COOPER, *MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON WORSHIP.*

A meeting was held May 16 as a first step in our assigned task of developing a plan for worship. Those in attendance at that meeting were Jo Ann Cooper, committee member Zan Brighter, committee member and member of Windward Christian's Worship Committee; Warren Studer and Bon Bonvillain, pastors of the respective churches; John and Carol Harmon, Worship Coordinators for Christ Presbyterian Church; and Bob Cooper, elder of Christ Presbyterian Church, assigned to assist the Harmons. Sally Bonvillain was also present as a guest.

The group attempted to bring to light the similarities and the differences of worship in the two churches in an effort to open and clear a path to a combined worship that would be meaningful and significant to all. It is our intent to find means of resolving any basic differences and to strengthen our similarities.

The following areas were discussed:

Baptism: It was felt that this is an area that would not be an area of conflict or problem. It is possible to have both forms of baptism--immersion or sprinkling--made available to those desiring. Baptism was not discussed at length, for we wanted to see what came out of the Presbyterian General Assembly.

Creeds: The Presbyterians on occasion include the reciting of a creed in their service, however, the Disciples do not believe in the use of creeds. It was agreed that the creed does not have to be eliminated from the service, but that those who wish to refrain be completely free to do so.

Invitation: This was an area of lengthy discussion, but no conclusions were reached except to do further research.

Communion: After discussion, we now recommend:

1. That communion be made available every Sunday as an integral part of the worship experience, and that the manner in which it is presented allow those who do not wish to partake to feel comfortable in not doing so.
2. We would ask Tom Paulsen to take this to the Session of Christ Presbyterian for approval for weekly communion.

We would also propose:

1. The following schedule for place of worship: June 17 through July 22 to be at Christ Presbyterian Church. July 29 will be Home Worship; and the Sundays in August and September 2 to be at Windward Christian Church.
2. The Sundays June 17 through September 2 shall be a time for experimenting with various ways of worshipping together in an attempt to find the most meaningful and satisfying forms. It is important that the congregations be made fully aware of this and that they understand what is being done so that they may look forward to each Sunday with a sense of openness and anticipation.
3. A Worship Committee of 4 or 5 with members made up from both congregations be established to work with Warren and Bon in planning each Sunday. Recommended that this committee be made up of the Worship Committee of each church.
4. The details of the various ways to be tried will be planned by this Worship Committee.
5. The two pastors should be in agreement before proposal is tried.
6. Feed-back should be reported to the Worship Committee and to this subcommittee for consideration and evaluation. The congregation should be encouraged to express their feelings and reactions, and in fact should feel a responsibility to do so.
7. We should continually attempt to emphasize our similarities rather than our differences, but where there are differences, we should be open in our attempts to resolve them.
8. Statement for educational purposes concerning committee progress and actions, to be included in regular monthly newsletter, and regular weekly bulletins during the summer. There was a common desire to keep the congregations fully informed of everything and to advise them of the nature of the experimental unification.

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY
of Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches
Minutes of the May 7, 1973 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. at Christ Presbyterian Church with prayer by Tom Paulsen, who had been designated chairman for this organizational meeting by the two churches' governing bodies at a joint meeting. The meeting was also attended by John Witwer, Jo Ann Cooper, and Rosemary Allen of CPC; Dick Dearing and Don Mumford represented WCC. The pastors of both churches, F. D. Bonvillain and Warren Studer, were also present.

The Committee members unanimously elected the following persons to responsible committee positions:

Tom Paulsen, Chairman
Dick Dearing, Vice Chairman
John Witwer, Clerk of Committee

Although no specific motions were offered, a discussion of the Clerk's duties and responsibilities brought out the following points: (1) minutes of each meeting were to be prepared for all interested persons and groups; (2) the coordination and continuity of all committee work was considered to be a very important objective, and (3) subcommittee reports and recommendations were to be committed to writing and distributed accordingly.

A number of questions were raised in an attempt to clarify the authority and powers invested in the Committee. Complete and satisfactory answers were not really found during this discussion. Clarifications will be sought from the two governing boards that appointed this Committee, during their next meetings. The consensus of the Committee members, concerning their assignment, was as follows:

- Develop a model or detailed plan for unification
- Initiate experimental unification actions and programs
- Present recommendations to both boards for approval and presentation to the congregations

The name "Committee for Unity" was unanimously adopted for this Committee. It will be used in all forms of future communications.

It was recommended that both congregations worship jointly from June 17 until September 2, over the coming summer months. It was felt to be important that our congregations should move more deeply into unification of various programs. We have already enjoyed a number of successful

unions and the timing for continuous joint worship appears to be right during the summer months. The vote in favor of this action was also unanimous.

During the above mentioned weekly combined worship services, there is to be about a three-minute time slot devoted to the following activities: (1) laying the scriptural foundation for the unification of the Body of Christ, (2) praying for our Lord's guidance and wisdom, (3) communicating the Committee's activities and progress. A motion to conduct these weekly activities was carried unanimously.

The following persons were appointed to four subcommittee assignments that had been proposed by Tom Paulsen:

1. Zan Brighter and Jo Ann Cooper -- Develop a plan for combined worship.
2. Dick Dearing and Tom Paulsen--Devise a method for handling assets and liabilities of both churches.
3. John Witwer and Paul Snipes--Provide communication methods to keep both congregations informed of developments.
4. Don Mumford and Rosemary Allen--Produce a structure for governing the combined congregations.

It was decided that the decisions, recommendations and plans developed in this Committee are to be communicated in a timely fashion to the boards of both congregations. Also copies of our minutes and other reports will go to Mr. Charles Marks and Dr. Donald Reisinger. Minutes and reports are to be distributed regularly to all Committee members and alternates.

It was further decided that all ordained ministers of the two congregations were to receive a letter from the Clerk of Committee. In that letter we would request their theological guidance and personal support for Committee work.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m. and closed with a prayer by John Witwer. The next Committee meeting is to be held at Christ Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, May 22, at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN WITWER
Clerk of Committee

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY
Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches
Minutes of the June 6, 1973 Meeting

The meeting was opened with prayer by Rosemary Allen. Those present included Tom Paulsen, Rosemary Allen, Jo Ann Cooper and John Witwer of CPC. Zan Brighter, Don Mumford, and Paul Snipes represented WCC.

Dr. Wehrli, who was invited as a result of a committee action in the prior meeting, was a guest speaker at this meeting. He discussed at length the scriptural basis for the unification of the Body of Christ and what this means in relation to our present unification effort. The entire meeting was devoted to this discussion.

The remainder of these minutes represent this writer's understanding of what was discussed in Dr. Wehrli's presentation. The scriptural references which he used are recorded here, for further study and future use by committee members, as they make weekly reports to the congregations. Many points and references were covered in this meeting, so it would be wise for all committee members to review the references individually and thereby fill in the void that may exist in these minutes.

In the first part of the presentation, Dr. Wehrli made a number of general points concerning the theology which is contained in the New Testament as a whole. The following points were made specifically:

There is no one right doctrine, theology or structure in the New Testament Church. The early church was one which could adapt and welcome diversity. It could change, grow and vary as the situation changed. There was only one church and it was unified -- it accommodated diverse practices and yet there was no division -- because the early Christians saw and experienced their unity in Christ. Their unity was not identified with the unification of practices.

What this means for us is that we may need to break away a little bit from some of the traditions of both of our churches and to strive to attain that common bond in Christ. We'll need to develop the courage and the guts that it takes to relate the Gospel to our community and to the present situation and unique local needs. We may need to strengthen our training in basic Biblical concepts and ideas, like the church is the Body of Christ. We should trace the Scriptures to see how the early church actually operated and functioned.

We'll have to find and develop the meaning that is in both the Presbyterian and Disciples traditions. We will have to affirm a "both/and" sense. First Corinthians, Chapter 12, was a subject of considerable discussion. As individuals have diversities of gifts, so our two congregations can have diverse gifts. Yet it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all and who has fitted us all together into one body. We'll have to hold onto the richness of diversity and flexibility, to share the rich heritage of our traditions and at the same time make room for the new being. We need to encourage the identifications, strengths, and uniquenesses--in the context of the scriptural concepts and centrality of Christ.

What is "unity"? How do we conceive it? With these questions placed before us, Dr. Wehrli discussed Colossians 1:15-20. The following points were made in the ensuing discussion: "In Christ all things cohere", we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ, what really integrates is our devotion to Christ, and Paul understands this cosmically. The message here seems to be relevant as we consider integrating our two congregations.

First Timothy was discussed at some length. The point was made that we must be careful not to allow either of our situations to throw up fences around us. It's so easy to build up trust in a system or tradition or practice and to have that become a form of idolatry. If we can build in self awareness, accommodate multiple forms and not become wedded to specifics, then we are more likely to experience that one certainty which is in Christ.

We should develop a deep understanding of what it means to have Christ at the center of our lives and worship experience. To accomplish this, we should study the life style of Jesus. We should seek to be united in Christ. We should pattern our endeavors after his ministry and develop our own discipleship today. In the words of Dr. Wehrli, "We should encourage the whole congregation to continue to wrestle with these questions."

Some comments were made concerning the present activities of the evaluation and unity committees. A large number of questions are being raised as these committees consider their tasks and wrestle with the unification process which is actually underway. As the questions press in they will probably cause the congregation to examine the vital Biblical concepts and to become a bit more relevant.

Ephesians 1:9-10 was discussed. Here God's purpose is to unite all things. The role of the Church is to be a visible sign of unity. The point was made that division in the

church becomes divisive. The final Scripture which was examined relating to this unity theme was the very beautiful 17th Chapter of the Gospel of John.

The session ended with a request from the group to Dr. Wehrli that he write a summary of the meeting or review our minutes. He agreed to do so.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m. with prayer by Tom Paulsen. The next meeting will be held at Christ Presbyterian Church upon call by the Vice-Chairman or Clerk of Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN WITWER
Clerk of Committee.

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY
Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches
Minutes of the July 9, 1973 Meeting

The meeting was opened with prayer by Acting Chairman Dick Dearing. Others present representing Windward Christian included Don Mumford and Paul Snipes. John Witwer, Jo Cooper and Rosemary Allen represented Christ Presbyterian. The pastors of both churches were also in attendance at the meeting which was held in the pastor's study of CPC.

First, the Committee reviewed the feedbacks which have been received recently from the congregation. Some written and verbal responses concerning the order of worship, frequency of communion, etc., have been received. The following consensus emerged from the discussion: the negative responses are not reactions to unification itself but rather to the mechanics or order of worship, there was an apparent absence of really serious concerns or problems and the worship planning task force had done its work very well (to the point that a commendation was offered by the Committee) and services have been going very well. There was some concern expressed that worship planning needed to be coordinated more by the pastors, who stated that they will take responsibility for being responsible to the congregation. There was really nothing that required any real change in direction and no further actions were taken concerning the responses.

Dick Dearing reported for his Committee. The discussions which have been held with Don Reisinger, Charles Marks, and the Stated Clerk of Synod lead us to the following conclusions: we have been encouraged to design a structure for our unified church which will allow us to fulfill our own local mission, those executives regard us as having the ability and capacity to design a suitable structure and government of our own much like we would work out an order of worship, and there seems to be little problem in adapting to our own situation the wording that is offered in the available models for unified churches. This sub-committee will proceed with its work according to these guidelines.

Don and Rosemary discussed their sub-committee's work and progress. It is planned that by mid September the preliminary planning will be completed by the sub-committee. They will seek the sample statements of suggested structures for unified churches from our respective executives, as soon as possible. It was the consensus of the whole Unity Committee that our two churches should just continue to do future events together; including nominating committee work, fall

stewardship campaigns, and board meetings. It was stated that we should think of the total combined congregation as we tackle each new project or select staff personnel. It was decided by unanimous vote to recommend that our two boards begin to hold joint meetings, beginning in August or early September.

It was noted by Warren Studer that a lot of people are raising questions concerning our unification progress. Is it on? What is the schedule or timing for its completion? Where are we going? What comes after September 2nd, our last planned joint worship service? A considerable discussion was then held concerning future meetings of the various judicatories, upcoming anniversaries for our two churches, general progress of the unification effort, fall planning, etc.

It was finally moved, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote that the following overall schedule and major milestones be established, to bring us toward the final unification in an orderly fashion:

<i>Target Date</i>	<i>Unification Milestones and Tasks</i>
September	Preliminary plans and models for the unification of CPC and WCC are to be ready for presentation to the congregations. Financial, structural, worship and other related plans due to be completed. They will be presented and a preliminary test will be made with both congregations, to determine their desire to complete the planned unification.
November	Final plans for unification will be reviewed with the Judicatories (where applicable) of both churches. Final congregational approval will be sought as well. After these efforts are properly completed, a statement of intent toward unification will be filed with the proper judicatories and our plans for formal presentations will be docketed.
January	Formal presentations of the unification plans and models will be made by our representatives before appropriate bodies. Authorization and approval of the plans will be sought formally.

February Final unification will be completed in a worship celebration to be held at a convenient time between the two anniversary dates of January 17 and February 23.

It was decided to recommend that we continue joint worship services at CPC from September 9 through the 30th.

The Clerk was asked to prepare a letter to Dodi Warren and express the Committee's appreciation for the design of the bulletin cover for our joint services.

The minutes of the prior meeting were approved. Dr. Wehrli enlarged upon the minutes as shown in the enclosed letter.

The next meeting of the Committee was set for August 20 at 8:00 p.m. at Christ Presbyterian. The meeting was closed with prayer by Rev. Studer.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN L. WITWER
Clerk of Committee

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY
Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches
Minutes of the August 20, 1973 Meeting

The meeting was opened with Prayer by Paul Snipes. Others present representing WCC included Don Mumford, Dick Dearing and Bon Bonvillain. Tom Paulsen, Rosemary Allen and John Witwer were present for CPC. The meeting was held in the pastor's study at CPC. Pat Snipe's brother, Rev. Morgan Sly, attended as a guest.

The minutes of the July 9 meeting were approved as written.

The entire meeting was devoted to a detailed presentation and discussion of the proposed structure for the new combined congregation. It was presented by Don Mumford and Rosemary Allen. Their sub-committee had met for six consecutive weeks and there were a number of ideas to be reviewed and decided. The majority of the meeting was devoted to improving the wording of the individual articles in the proposed structure, which will be rewritten and submitted separately.

Two alternatives were presented for the membership of the proposed Church Council. After some comparison and evaluation of the alternatives, it was unanimously decided to have a nine member Council which is similar in structure to CPC's present Session. Ten question of how the Moderator shall be selected for the Council was debated at length. No clear position was established as to which of the alternatives that were discussed was better. Most committee members wished to give this question further thought and the decision on this question was delayed until the next meeting.

A title was chosen for the structure proposal: "Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity."

The next meeting was scheduled for August 28, 1973, to be held at 8:00 p.m. at Christ Presbyterian in the pastor's study. The closing prayer was offered by Bon.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN L. WITWER
Clerk of Committee

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY
Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches
Minutes of the August 28, 1973 Meeting

The meeting was opened with prayer by John Witwer. Others present representing Windward Christian included Don Mumford, Dick Dearing, and Bon Bonvillain. Rosemary Allen was also present representing Christ Presbyterian. Tom Paulsen and Paul Snipes, who could not attend, were present in the form of voting instructions and discussions with other members.

The minutes of the August 20 meeting were approved as written.

The entire meeting was devoted to the task of reviewing a new draft of the "Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity." The wording and structure of that statement was reviewed and modified, to the satisfaction of the entire committee, point by point, in this lengthy meeting. A final draft will now be prepared separately for presentation to the individual boards and congregations.

A lengthy debate was held concerning the various alternatives for the selection of the Moderator of the Church Council. Some of the key points that were made during this discussion were as follows:

- The lay moderator of the Church Council should be selected with much the same care and process as is used in selecting a pastor, although the term is shorter.
- The calling process was discussed and it was the desire of the Committee to select and install moderators in this fashion. It is especially vital that we call forth the proper person with the necessary qualifications.
- A resulting structure was desired so that the working relationship between the pastor and the moderator would be the best that could possibly be achieved.
- The moderator was to be selected in a manner that would give him the greatest possible rapport and support with the congregation.
- It was also the desire of the Committee that our church structure be developed in a manner that would place people in positions for which they are best qualified. A number of other practical considerations were discussed too, however, they are too numerous to mention here.

When the discussion ended, it was moved, seconded and unanimously decided that the Moderator should be elected annually by the congregation. He would be chosen and nominated, after careful consideration, by the Nominating Committee.

The meeting was concluded at 11:15 p.m. with prayer by Bon Bonvillain.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN L. WITWER
Clerk of Committee

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY
Christ Presbyterian and Windward Christian Churches
Minutes of the September 5, 1973 Meeting

The meeting was opened with prayer by Acting Chairman, Dick Dearing. Other representatives who were present at the meeting for Windward Christian included Don Mumford, Zan Brighter and Paul Snipes. Christ Presbyterian laymen Rosemary Allen, Jo Ann Cooper and John Witwer were present, as were both of the pastors of the two churches.

The minutes of the August 28 meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

The final version of the "Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity," as modified during the lengthy August 28 meeting, was subjected to another intensive re-evaluation during the majority of this meeting. Many other structural and communications alternatives were reexamined. Potential problems were considered, that might possibly arise from the structure that was adopted and included in the final plan for unification. New wording changes to the final draft were offered for consideration, by both those who were and those who were not at the prior meeting. When the discussion was finally ended, not so much as one word, concept or decision was changed from the draft that was completed in the August 28 meeting. The "Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity" stood up well under intensive testing by many persons who were present. Also of significance the full committee was present for this meeting, except for Tom Paulsen.

Quite a number of very valuable suggestions were offered, which received strong endorsement by committee members, during the above mentioned discussions. These suggestions were offered toward the improvement, clarification and expansion of the final draft of the plan for unification. They were also offered in response to the concerns that were raised concerning the final plan. These suggestions at the close of this discussion, were reviewed and incorporated into a supplemental plan and set of recommendations, which should accompany the Plan for Unity and aid in its implementation.

The motion was made and unanimously approved that the following "next steps" should be taken to accomplish an effective implementation of the final Plan:

- The authority, responsibilities and scope of activities for both the Church Council and Program Minis-

tries Council should be carefully defined at the outset. Specific tasks that fall under the "Policy" and "Programming" areas should be clarified for these two Councils, respectively, in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the Plan for Unity.

- The role of the moderators of both Councils should be clarified, to include perhaps the preparation of appropriate duties and responsibilities statements. This should be done without limiting the initiative and freedom of both individuals.
- The Committee for Unity envisioned the Program Ministries Council, although it is composed primarily of the "Coordinators" as we have previously known them, as being a stronger planning and administrative group in the future. It would be on parity with the Church Council; however, it would report to the Church Council and be subject to policy determinations emanating from that body. This stands to reason as this Council will be moderated by the pastor who is professionally trained in the Program Ministries Council's key activity areas.
- Further detailed planning should be initiated and authorized by the combined Board. Preparation of By-Laws, Constitution, etc., will be required in the future.
- We should implement the basic "Plan for Unity", and, as the new structure is in actual use, those further clarifications should be developed and implemented as well.

The Committee selected Don Mumford, Rosemary Allen, and John Witwer to attend the combined Boards meeting on Tuesday, September 11, for the purpose of presenting and discussing the Plan for Unification. This discussion was tentatively docketed for 8:15 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned with a closing prayer by Rev. Warren Studer, pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN L. WITWER
Clerk of Committee

September 18, 1973

Dear Christian Friends,

It brings great joy to the members of the Committee for Unity, the Session of Christ Presbyterian Church, and the Board of Windward Christian Church, to provide you with a copy of the "Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity." This document outlines the plan for the unification of our two churches. It is forwarded with the unanimous endorsement of the Committee and combined Boards.

Our recent bulletin covers and committee member presentations have all stressed our theme of "Unity in Christ." It has been exciting and inspiring to witness the fulfillment of that beautiful prayer by Jesus found in John 17:21: "My prayer for all of them is that they will be of one heart and mind, just as you and I are, Father--that just as you are in me and I am in you, so they will be in us, and the world will believe you sent me." This verse was taken from The Living Bible. In verse 22, Jesus says, "I have given them the glorious unity of being one." The Committee has indeed enjoyed a glorious oneness in Christ and because of this the enclosed document became possible.

The Plan for Unity is forwarded for your information and review. After the worship service this coming Sunday, September 23, the Committee for Unity will make a further presentation during the adult study hour. You are invited to attend and discuss the enclosed plan with us. We want your feedback. We also believe everyone would want to enjoy the outpouring of his blessings, as we attempt to understand and be obedient to our Lord's will and plan for our two churches.

This plan will soon be presented to the various judicatories for review and approval. This work must be completed during the next few months. If we are to complete our unification by our anniversary dates around the first of February. Thus we want our congregations to receive a full progress report at this important juncture. We also want to obtain a valid test of the suitability of this plan, from the congregations' point of view, before proceeding with further detailed planning activities.

We look forward to fellowshiping with you again on this coming Lord's day and to sharing this plan with you.

Yours in Christ,

JOHN L. WITWER, Clerk
Committee for Unity

October 15, 1973

COMMITTEE FOR UNITY
WINDWARD CHRISTIAN CHURCH
CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dear Christian Friends:

I have several reasons for writing to you at this time, but first and foremost is to congratulate you and to thank you for the fantastic job you did in drafting the "Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity." In my first letter to you back in May, I stated that our task was to develop a model church that combines our two congregations into one. I said make it a good model - it's the foundation for what is to come. I proposed that we approach our problem by:

1. Developing a plan for combined worship.
2. A method of handling the assets and liabilities of both churches.
3. Produce a structure for governing the combined congregations.
4. Provide a method of communication to keep the congregations informed of developments.

I said that we must remember the sensitive nature of combining historical teachings and doctrine.

You accomplished these goals and preserved the elements that tend to identify in each of our own denominations. Your sensitive feelings and Christian ideals have accomplished what many thought was impossible. I could not be prouder than to have been the chairman of this tremendous group, for this my heartfelt thanks.

I have asked you for a final meeting (WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 8:00 p.m.) to resolve a matter that I feel is of utmost importance. Based on feed-back from the two informal congregational meetings and the results of my response to the combined governing Board of Windward Christian and Christ Presbyterian last week, it was requested that our Committee comment on a proposed amendment/addendum to the Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity."

Both I and the combined governing Boards feel that our Plan can stand on its own and would be accepted by both congregations. However, I also feel that the congregational feed-back can be satisfied by addition of a few simple paragraphs. These items were addressed in all cases by the Committee as items that remain to complete the unification. I feel that had I done by job in the final stages of the preparation of the Plan, I would have worked to have

these items incorporated in the Plan. For this, I apologize for being remiss in my duties as your chairman. I do feel this addendum is necessary, not only to satisfy the whole congregation but to more clearly define the time and tools between acceptance of the Plan for Unity and the day of actual unification.

Again I thank you for the personal gratification you gave me through this association and your dedication and devotion to do Christ's work.

Sincerely in Christ,

TOM PAULSEN

STATEMENT OF MISSION
December 5, 1973

Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church exist within a few hundred feet of each other along "church row" in Windward, Oahu. We are both relatively new congregations, the Windward Christian Church having been organized on January 17, 1960 and Christ Presbyterian Church on February 23, 1964. Each church was established for identical reasons -- persons with Disciple or Presbyterian loyalties, such as those in the military, who were seeking denominational identity. Tourists visiting Hawaii questioned the lack of our church's presence here. Windward, Oahu seemed to be a fruitful field for mission expansion. So we were established here together in the early 60's. Windward Christian Church grew to a peak membership of 115 and Christ Presbyterian to 250.

A review of Session minutes of Christ Presbyterian Church and Board Minutes of Windward Christian Church reveals that as early as 1967 negotiations were under way to combine church school programs. When a Coalition of Churches was formed in 1969, members of both churches began to work together in various causes and concerns. Pastors of the two churches worked closely together and considered sharing programs and facilities. Then, after the pastor of Windward Christian left, Mr. Studer assumed the role of administrator through the Coalition. About this time church schools combined, and one of the most decisive moves toward union occurred when an adult class, composed of members of both churches, studied COCU's Plan of Union under the leadership of Dave Steele, a United Presbyterian minister who is chaplain at Punahou Schools. This class proposed to both churches that an Easter service be held jointly, beginning at Christ Presbyterian and then processing to Windward Christian for a service of baptism and communion. From this day (Easter, 1972) forward the momentum has built up toward unification and the results are seen in the Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity.

The mission of the new church is revealed existentially in the coming together of fellow Christians who see themselves working in a common cause. Recognizing this sense of unity is itself a part of the mission, for it is the fulfillment of Christ's wish that "they all be one." Seeing our diversity as enriching and not divisive, contributes to the ecumenical revolution which is a fact of the 70's, especially at grass roots levels such as ours. Thus it has an evangelistic thrust proclaiming to the world that the Holy Spirit is indeed drawing his followers together.

The mission of the new church is revealed in our involvement with other Councils and Coalitions. We are involved with the Disciples of Christ in Hawaii and the Hawaii Presbyterian Council. Through these Councils we seek to work together in carrying out Christ's work in Hawaii, in evangelism, christian education, social concerns and ecumenical involvements. Both of our churches are active, contributing and participating members of the Hawaii Council of Churches. Two of its staff, including the Executive, are from Windward Christian. We are both active and have given much leadership in the Windward Coalition of Churches. So we see ecumenism an integral part of our mission. We are involved with our time, talent and money with many important outreach programs, such as a drug rehabilitation center, an alcoholism rehabilitation center, a youth correctional facility. The facilities of Windward Christian have been opened for Senior Citizens use two days a week, with 60 or 70 meeting for recreation, crafts, and fellowship. We have contributed leadership in making it possible for Filipinos and Hawaiians to organize through the Self Development of Peoples program. We helped establish a youth hostel in Waikiki, as well as the Waikiki Drug Clinic. Our people respond to the crucial concerns of the community.

The mission of the new church is revealed in our support of the whole program and outreach of both the Christian Church and United Presbyterian Church. We keep in close touch with the pulse of the church and its mission throughout the world. This past year we had elder representation at the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in Oamah and at the Disciples of Christ Assembly in Cincinnati. We feel we can do more effective work together than separately. Our goals, we have discovered, are on collision course. We both desire to evangelize for Jesus Christ in Hawaii.

It is important to point out that Christ Presbyterian Church, with two Windward Christian members participating, just completed a Mission Study, requested by the Presbytery and Congregational Development Committee. It will be our purpose to be guided by this study and to update our goals and objectives.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

AND

PLAN FOR UNITY

of

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, KAILUA

A Congregation of
The United Presbyterian Church, USA

and

WINDWARD CHRISTIAN CHURCH, KAILUA

A congregation of
The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Approved by
The Session of Christ Presbyterian Church
and
The Board of Windward Christian Church
on
September 11, 1973

And Amended
on
December 18, 1973

STATEMENT OF INTENT

We, the congregations of Christ Presbyterian Church Kailua, Hawaii, and Windward Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Kailua, Hawaii in order to witness to the unity which is in Christ, and being a company of the People of God celebrating the One Father, Son and Holy Spirit, moving toward his coming kingdom, and seeking in true faithfulness to unite under the one Gospel for Christ's mission and service in the world; do pledge ourselves corporately and individually:

To a renewal from the Holy Spirit to join in struggle against all of the problems of men which impede or restrict the unity of the Spirit which is the will of God as revealed in his Son, Jesus Christ;

To minister to the needs of all;

To provide for the common preservation and use of the many gifts, traditions and resources of our Christian heritage;

And to unite in all ways in our worship of God and in the mission of His Church;

Do hereby covenant together in this plan of union for the Church of Christ Uniting so that men may see our good works and give glory to the One God, Father and Creator of us all.

PLAN OF UNION

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of the united congregation shall be:

CHRIST CHURCH
Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians
of Kailua, Hawaii

PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to witness through fellowship to the unity which is in Christ and to work diligently toward the spreading of the Gospel which is the word and will of God as made known in the life, death and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ and to call all Christians in a common ministry to all mankind.

ARTICLE II
MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this church shall consist of all of those now identified as members of the two churches and all others who shall unite with us by confession of faith, and by baptism, or by transfer of membership. Voting privileges shall be extended to all members present at any and all duly called meetings of the congregation.

ARTICLE III
GOVERNING STRUCTURE

1. The governing body of the United Church, duly authorized by a majority vote of the congregation shall be referred to as the Church Council and shall consist of nine Council members elected as serving elders by the congregation, three each year for three-year terms. Three of the above members shall serve as Trustees, one to be elected each year to provide continuity. One Trustee shall serve as Treasurer.

2. The Pastor shall be the Moderator of the Church Council. The Church Council shall elect its own Clerk and other officers as required.

3. The Pastor and the Clerk of the Church Council shall be ex-officio members of all Councils and regulatory bodies of the Church.

4. It shall be the responsibility of the Church Council to rule on all policies of the church. It shall seek always to respond to the needs of the congregation in keeping with the guidance of the Scriptures and in service to the purposes of Christ's Church in the world.

5. The Church Council shall be responsible for disposition of assets and liabilities in accordance with Article VII below and contingent upon the agreement of the Trustees of the separate corporations in keeping with the regulatory restrictions of the judicatories of the denominations.

6. No concern, nor any matter pertaining to the above shall be referred to a higher judicatory except upon failure of agreement by the Church Council and then only after a majority vote of the congregation. (This shall in no way impinge upon the rights of the individual members to appeal as outlined in Paragraph 66.04, sub-paragraphs 1, o, of the Presbyterian Book of Order, 1972-73.)

ARTICLE IV
PROGRAM MINISTRIES COUNCIL

1. The Program Ministries Council shall consist of the Pastor(s) of the Church and Coordinators for each of the following areas:

- A. Worship
- B. Education (study)
- C. Witness (outreach/mission)
- D. Gathered Church (fellowship)

2. The Coordinators shall be chosen by the Nominating Committee subject to approval of the Church Council.

3. The Pastor of the Congregation shall serve as Moderator of this Council.

4. It shall be the responsibility of the Program Ministries Council to plan, develop and implement all programs of the church in keeping with the policies set by the Church Council.

5. Additional task forces and sub-committee members may be selected and/or appointed in a manner determined by the Program Ministries Council according to the needs of the individual Coordinators.

6. The Program Ministries Council members shall serve for a one year term.

ARTICLE V
NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members to serve a one year term. One member shall be drawn from the Church Council and four shall be elected annually by the Congregation. The Nominating Committee is responsible for all personnel needs of the church. The Committee shall elect its own chairman.

ARTICLE VI
ELIGIBILITY

All members of the congregation shall be eligible for any and all offices, councils and committees subject to nomination and election by the congregation or by appointment of the Church Council.

ARTICLE VII
ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

All assets, except real estate, shall be transferred to the United Church. Each of the uniting churches, however, shall maintain its present corporate identity for the purpose of holding title to its real property. Each corporation (present) shall assign said real property, including its use, income and liabilities, to the United Church. Such assignment shall be at no cost and shall continue for a period so long as the assignee remains a part of the United Church. The Church Council shall be bound to administer any trust or moneys received in accordance with the provisions of the original establishment of such trust or gift and shall comply with any limitations or use requirements which may apply to the assigned real property. All liabilities of the uniting churches shall become liabilities of the United Church. In the event of the dissolution of the United Church, the assignment of the real property is null and void and no longer in effect.

ARTICLE VIII
DIAKONIA

It is the concept of this United Church that all Christians are called to ministry in Christ Jesus and are Deacons in the service of His Church. (Ephesians 4:7-11.)

December 18, 1973

TO THE CONGREGATIONS OF CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN AND WINDWARD
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Dear Christian Friends,

This letter is written in hopes that it will clarify the points raised in regard to the "Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity." Our response to you is in the form of questions and answers and covers all of the previous questions we received as feed-back from you and is as follows:

1. Will the present pastor continue?

The Committee for Unity recommends that the present pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church, Warren Studer, serve as first pastor of the new united church. The Pastor or Pastors of the United Church shall be a member of each judicatory of immediate jurisdiction and shall be accountable to both. The new church will comply with whatever steps are required by both denominations to establish the proper pastoral relationships. It is our clear understanding that ministers of the United Presbyterian Church and of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be eligible for the office of pastor. We are, however, recommending as is indicated that the present pastor be the pastor of the United Church subject to the approval of the proper judicatories. It is our desire that this be an integral part of the Statement and an affirmative vote of approval for the Plan will constitute an affirmation of Warren Studer as Pastor of the United Church.

2. What are the changes (from present Christ Presbyterian responsibilities?

We foresee no major change in his pastoral responsibilities for care and spiritual guidance of the congregation and other continuing pastoral duties. He maintains usual relationships of a local pastor with higher church bodies (judicatories), such as Presbytery of the Pacific and the state association of Disciples of Christ. He also continues in ongoing programs of the higher church bodies of his choice, as for instance, the Pension Plan of the United Presbyterian Church of U.S.A.

3. How is membership counted or recorded in regard to the two congregations?

We are required to report 50% (equal portions) of our total membership in the United Church to each body - that is 50% will be recorded statistically as Presbyterian; 50% as Disciple. We also report the total membership to each denomination for records concerning united churches. This is required by Presbyterian Book of Order (Union Churches, Chapter XXXVI) and agreeable to Disciples.

4. What about the corporation, assessments, benevolences?

The United Church shall cause a corporation to be formed under the Laws of the State of Hawaii. Assessments (per capita tax) established by judicatories will be paid as required. Mission causes of both denominations will be supported on an equitable basis. It does sound strange to form a third corporation. However, by keeping the corporations that now exist, we retain the property as it presently exists without renegotiating the lease hold land. In this manner, if the new congregation should ever be dissolved, all property shall without qualification, be retained under the appropriate judicatories of both denominations.

5. What about creeds?

Creeds have not shared equal significance in the two churches being merged. However, recognizing that creeds are not to be used coercively but for the guidance of the members, they may be used as acts of praise and allegiance that lead to a deeper understanding of God's reconciling work in Jesus Christ. Classic expressions such as the Apostles and Nicene Creeds have been commended for use by the Executive Committee of Council on Church Union, in which Disciples and Presbyterians are represented. (A Plan of Union, page 26, #9)

6. How shall we worship as a united church?

It shall be our purpose to make corporate worship a fulfilling experience for those whose traditions have been either Disciples or Presbyterian. The Communion Table will share visibility and centrality with the Bible and pulpit. The Lord's Supper will be provided on each Lord's Day to all who wish to partake. The Sacrament of Baptism shall be offered to children of believers as well as upon public confession of faith by consenting believers. Following appropriate instruction and prep-

aration, baptism shall be administered with water by either immersion or sprinkling in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the choice of mode and time of life, the convictions of the person to be baptized, of the person(s) administering or sponsoring baptism and of the congregation must be respected.

7. What sort of timetable is anticipated from now on?

- A. Combined Boards have set the date, January 6, 1974, for the two congregations to vote acceptance/rejection for unity. Formal request to unite will be presented to Presbytery, if the vote is to accept and unite, on January 8.
- B. Upon acceptance by Presbytery, Combined Boards set in motion steps toward activating structure of new Union Church.
 - 1. (Present Combined) Nominating Committee to select and nominate members to new Church Council divided into classes of 1,2,3 year terms.
 - 2. The date set for formal unification and election of new Council is February 10, 1974.
 - 3. Upon formal unification, new structure and officers begin work!

8. Statement: As the Committee for Unity has completed work and its report is accepted by combined boards, further official actions will come from the combined boards to complete unifying of Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church as a united church.

Details of constitutional background of committee work and guidelines for formulating any future constitution or by-laws, if needed by the united church, can be found in Presbyterian Book of Order, Chapter XXXVI and COCU's Plan of Union.

It is with pleasure and great anticipation we forward this letter to you. May God grant that our vision becomes a reality.

Sincerely in Christ,
The Committee for Unity
Tom Paulsen, Chairman

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
P. O. Box 788
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

December 19, 1973

Dear Fellow Members of Christ Presbyterian Church:

First of all, may I take this opportunity, on behalf of the Session and Moderator, Warren Studer, to wish you all a Merry Christmas. It has been a good year for the people of our church community, and we all look forward to an exciting new year.

One event that will occur in February, is our church's tenth anniversary. For those of us who have been here from the beginning, it is hard to believe that these years have passed. These have been adventuresome years, full of change and the willingness to try new things.

Now we come to a time in our church's life where we have the opportunity, both individually and collectively, to act out our faith in a new way. I am speaking of course of the proposed merger of Christ Presbyterian Church and Windward Christian Church.

Enclosed you will find three items that deserve your utmost attention. These are:

1. Statement of Intent and Plan for Unity, dated September 11, 1973 and amended December 18, 1973.
2. Statement of Mission
3. Question and answer sheet

For a little over a year, the elected boards of these two churches, and various lay committees, have been exploring ways to work together and these efforts have produced these documents which describe how we can become one in Christ. You will note some changes in the plan for unity, primarily the deletion of the lay moderator which has been done in response to requests from our Presbytery. The documents and plan have the full, undivided, support of the governing boards of both churches. Further our Presbytery, to whom we are responsible, has supported this plan.

We are calling a congregational meeting to be held on the first Sunday of the new year, January 6, 1974. The meeting will immediately follow our morning worship service. A secret ballot will be taken asking for your approval of this plan.

At the same time, the congregation of Windward Christian Church will be meeting to take similar action.

Your friend in Christ,

BOB COOPER
Clerk of Session

FROM BOOK OF ORDER
Chapter XXXVI
Of Union Churches

1. Particular churches of this Church may unite to form union churches with one or more particular churches of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, of the Reformed Church in American, and of other Reformed bodies, with the approval of the presbytery.
2. The following Plan of Union shall be adopted by the union church so formed:
 - a. The following Plan of Union is adopted by the _____ Presbyterian Church of _____ and the _____ Church of _____ effective as of the date when each of the congregations has approved the plan by a 2/3 majority of those present at a regularly called congregational meeting with such notice and quorum as is required by the Constitution of each Church, and when the presbytery of jurisdiction of each church has approved the particular union and this Plan of Union.
 - b. The purpose of this union is to provide for the worship of Almighty God and instruction in the Christian religion by a united congregation which will share the property, real and personal, of the uniting churches and provide for the services of a minister or ministers for the united church.
 - c. The united church shall be known as the _____.
 - d. The united church shall be subject to the Constitution of each Church involved as set forth in sub-sections r, s, u, v below.
 - e. The session (consistory) shall submit its records annually, and whenever requested to each judicatory of jurisdiction.
 - f. The membership of the united church shall consist of those who were members of the uniting churches, plus those received by the session (consistory) of the united church.
 - g. The session of the united church shall report an equal share of the total membership to each judicatory of jurisdiction, and such membership shall be published in the Minutes (Acts and Proceedings) of the General

Assembly, with a note to the effect that the report is that of a union church, and with an indication of the total actual membership. A similar report of church school members, baptisms, etc., and financial expenditures shall be made by the session and noted by each General Assembly in its minutes.

h. Initially the officers of the united church, elders and deacons, shall be those officers in active service of the uniting churches who will undertake to perform their ordination responsibilities under the Constitution of each Church as indicated in subsections d above and r, s, u, and v below.

i. At the first annual meeting subsequent to the effective date of the union, new classes of officers, to replace the officers noted in section h above, shall be elected by the united congregation according to the Constitutional procedure in force as a consequence of section v below.

j. The pastoral relations of the ministers of the uniting churches shall be dissolved automatically by the action of the presbytery of jurisdiction in approving this plan, but they may be eligible to be ministers (pastors or associate pastors) of the united church according to the will of the united congregation and subject to the approval of the presbyteries (both the classes and the presbytery).

k. The minister or ministers of the united church shall be full and responsible members of each judicatory of immediate jurisdiction and shall be subject to discipline as provided below in paragraph s.

l. The united church shall cause a corporation to be formed under the appropriate laws of the state where permissible. That corporation shall include in its articles or charter the substance of subsections b, c and d above.

m. All property of the uniting churches, real and personal, shall be transferred to the corporation formed in subsection l above. The new corporation shall be the legal successor of the corporations, if any, of the uniting churches, and it shall be bound to administer any trust property or moneys received in accordance with the provisions of the original establishment of the trust. All liabilities of the uniting churches shall be liabilities of the united church. In any state where a church corporation is forbidden, the

purposes of this paragraph shall be achieved in harmony with the law of that state.

n. Trustees of the corporation (or the unincorporated body) shall be elected in harmony with civil law according to the Constitutional provisions outlined in subsection d above, as interpreted by subsection v below.

o. While recognizing the basic right of any giver to designate the cause or causes to which his own gift shall go, the session of the united church shall annually propose to the congregation a general mission or benevolence program which shall be divided equitably among the officially approved causes of each denomination. The proportions shall be as the session shall decide in response to the requests of the higher judicatories.

p. Per capita apportionments or assessments shall be paid to each presbytery of jurisdiction on the basis of the total communicant membership of the union church, equally divided among the denominations involved.

q. All members of the united church shall be under the discipline of the session (board of elders) according to rules agreed upon in harmony with the Constitution of each denomination where they coincide, and in harmony with the mandatory provisions of the Constitution of one denomination where the others are permissible, and at the choice of the session (board of elders) where they may be contradictory.

r. Appeals or complaints against the actions of the session shall be made to one judicatory only (presbytery or classis) at the choice of the members and all subsequent appeals or complaints shall be in the courts of the members' original choice, and decisions so finally made shall be binding on the session (consistory) and on the member.

s. The minister or ministers shall be subject to the discipline of the presbyteries (the presbytery and the classis) provided that when either shall begin an action it shall invite a committee from the others to join the commissioner, prosecutor, or prosecuting committee in formulating and pressing the charges. In the event of appeal the case shall be finally decided by the highest court to which the appeal is taken in the Church which commenced the action and that decision shall be equally binding on the presbyteries (both the presbytery and the classes).

t. The minister or ministers shall participate in the denominational Pension Plan of one of the Churches. If he is already participating in one plan, he shall remain in that plan. If he is not a member of any, he shall choose among them.

u. Complaints against the administrative acts of the session may be taken under the constitutional provisions of only one denomination, according to the choice of the complainant, and once being complained to one judicatory, no other denomination shall accept jurisdiction in the same matter.

v. Wherever the Constitutions of the denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive. Wherever there are conflicting mandatory provisions (except as provided in subsection q above), the session of the united church shall petition the judicatories of immediate jurisdiction to overturn their respective highest courts to resolve the conflict either by authoritative interpretation or by constitutional amendment.

w. A union church may be dissolved by a 2/3 vote of two congregational meetings, held not less than one year and not more than two years apart, subject to the concurrence of the presbyteries involved. In case of dissolution of a union church, all property of the united church, real and personal, shall be divided equally between the presbyteries of jurisdiction.

3. Particular churches of the Church may unite to form union churches with one or more particular churches of other Churches with which the General Assembly is in correspondence, with the approval of the presbytery.

4. The following Plan of Union shall be adopted by the union church so formed:

a. The union church shall be subject to the Constitution (Disciples or other organic documents) of each Church involved, as set forth in paragraphs l, m, o and p below.

b. The union church shall be governed by a representative body elected by the congregation from among its members. This governing body shall have the powers of the session. The members of the governing body need not be ruling elders, but if the plan of union provides for ruling elders, the governing body shall consist of ruling elders.

c. Members of the governing body of the union church shall be eligible to membership and office in the higher judicatories.

d. The governing body of the union church shall report an equal share of the total membership to each judicatory of jurisdiction, and such membership shall be published in the Minutes of each Church involved with a note to the effect that the report is that of a union church, and with an indication of the total actual membership. A similar report of church school members, baptisms, etc., and financial expenditures, shall be made by the governing body and noted by each Church involved in its Minutes.

e. The minister or ministers of the united church shall be full and responsible members of each judicatory of immediate jurisdiction and shall be subject to discipline as provided below in paragraph m.

f. The united church shall cause a corporation to be formed under the appropriate laws of the state where permissible. That corporation shall include in its articles or charter the substance of paragraph a above.

g. All property of the uniting churches, real and personal, shall be transferred to the corporation formed in paragraph f above. The new corporation shall be the legal successor of the corporations, if any, of the uniting churches, and it shall be bound to administer any trust property or moneys received in accordance with the provisions of the original establishment of the trust. All liabilities of the uniting churches shall be liabilities of the united church. In any state where a church corporation is forbidden, the purposes of this paragraph shall be achieved in harmony with the law of that state.

h. Trustees of the corporation (or the unincorporated body) shall be elected in harmony with civil law according to the constitutional provisions outlined in paragraph a above as interpreted by paragraph p below.

i. While recognizing the basic right of any giver to designate the cause or causes to which his own gift shall go, the governing body of the united church shall annually propose to the congregation a general mission or benevolence program which shall be divided equitably among the officially approved causes of each denomination. The proportions shall be as the governing body shall decide in response to the requests of the higher

judicatories.

j. Per capita apportionments or assessments shall be paid to each judicatory of jurisdiction on the basis of the total communicant membership of the union church, equally divided among the denominations involved.

k. All members of the united church shall be under the discipline of the governing body according to rules agreed upon in harmony with the Constitution of each denomination where they coincide, and in harmony with the mandatory provisions of the Constitution of one denomination where the others are permissive, and at the choice of the governing body where they may be contradictory.

l. Appeals or complaints against the actions of the governing body shall be made to one judicatory only at the choice of the members and all subsequent appeals or complaints shall be in the courts of the members' original choice, and decisions so finally made shall be binding on the governing body and on the members.

m. The minister or ministers shall be subject to the discipline of the judicatories of jurisdiction provided that when one shall begin an action, it shall invite a committee from the others to join the commissioner, prosecutor, or prosecuting committee in formulating and pressing the charges. In the event of appeal the case shall be finally decided by the highest court to which the case is taken in the Church which commenced the action and that decision shall be equally binding on the judicatories of jurisdiction.

n. The minister or ministers shall participate in the denominational Pension Plan of one of the several Churches. If he is already participating in one plan, he shall remain in that plan. If he is not a member of any, she shall choose among them.

o. Complaints against the administrative acts of the governing body may be taken under the Constitutional provisions of only one denomination, according to the choice of the complainant, and once being complained to one judicatory, no other denomination shall accept jurisdiction in the same matter.

p. Wherever the Constitutions of the denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive. Wherever there are conflicting mandatory provisions (except as

provided in k above), the governing body of the united church shall petition the judicatories of immediate jurisdiction to overture their respective highest courts to resolve the conflict either by authoritative interpretation or by constitutional amendment.

q. A union church may be dissolved by a 2/3 vote of two congregational meetings, held not less than one year and not more than two years apart, subject to the concurrence of the judicatories involved. In case of dissolution of a union church, all property of the united church, real and personal, shall be divided equally between the judicatories of jurisdiction.

5. Particular churches of this Church may unite to form churches with particular churches of other Churches, one or more of which are other than Churches with which General Assembly is in correspondence, with the approval of the presbytery and the General Assembly, provided that a Plan of Union, including the provisions set out in Sections 3 and 4 above, is adopted by the union church so formed.
6. No provision in Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 above shall be construed as modifying or amending the Constitution of this Church in its application to any but union churches organized under this chapter, their members, officers, or ministers.